

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES & Sketches



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FORES'S
SPORTING NOTES
AND
SKETCHES.

FORES'S
SPORTING NOTES
&
Sketches

A Quarterly Magazine

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Keep your hands down, Miss!

And Yours

FORES'S

SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

'MY DAUGHTER'S PONY.'

By FINCH MASON.



LET me take the reader into my confidence at once and declare myself a member—a distinguished member I think I may say — of a very much abused calling—to my mind, at least.

I am, in short, as Mr. Micawber would say, a bookmaker—or, to use a thoroughly *fin de siècle* expression, a 'bookie.' Am I ashamed of it? Certainly not. Why should I be? When I think that I am a landed proprietor (I have got the nicest place 'away down Harrow way' you ever saw in your life—stables, hothouses, greenhouses, piggeries—all perfection), also of the comfortable sum at my bankers, of the still more comfortable sum invested in divers paying concerns, of my girls with their German governesses and their music and drawing masters, and my two boys receiving their education at one of the most fashionable of our public schools (the *gutter*, I may mention, was the public school my parents sent *me* to)—when I contemplate all this, I say, and dwell upon the fact that it has all been accomplished by laying steadily against the favourites for the last I don't know how many years, can you blame me for being proud of my profession?

I attribute in a great measure my success on the Turf to two causes—first, the valuable information I am in the habit of receiving from an army of horse-watchers, as small and select as that in the service of the celebrated Grand Duchess of Gerolstein, and employed solely by myself; secondly, a sort of intuitive knowledge I seem to possess—how, I really can't tell you—of the presence in the Turf market, before a big race, of

what, in the peculiar but graphic phraseology of the Ring, is termed a 'stiff 'un.' Just as some hunting men have an intuitive knowledge of the run of a fox, so in like manner have I of a horse that is likely to see a short price or a long one, as the case may be, in an important event on the Turf.

Not only do I know this myself, but my *confrères* in the Ring are aware of it too. If I once open fire on a horse he seldom if ever recovers, so deadly is my pencil considered. Generally, of course, I have a reason; but as often as not I have none at all. Sometimes, for instance, I take a dislike to a horse because of his name, and slate him accordingly, and invariably with good effect. I think there is everything in a name myself. I wasn't going in the celebrated 'Yellow Jack's' time, but if I had, Lord! how I would have peppered him! You might just as well christen a horse 'Scarletina' or 'Small-pox' at once. I wish to goodness some enterprising owner would name his Derby colt 'Gout.' Why, I'd never *leave* him, and I *know* he'd come in last. Overlay my book? I should rather think I would indeed!

I remember some years ago there was a horse entered in the Derby—an own brother to Doncaster if I remember right—called 'All Heart and No Peel,' and who was thought to have a decided chance for that event. His name was quite enough for me, and I took my usual dislike him, which was increased when I saw him run as a two-year-old at Newmarket at the back end. There were only two runners. One of Mr. Bowes's, with Fordham 'up,' being the other; and they laid odds (which I took freely), on 'All Heart and No Peel.' It looked odds on his winning easily at first, but the moment Fordham challenged on his opponent, back went his ears, and he wouldn't try a yard. If anybody was desirous of backing him for the Derby after this, he couldn't go away and say that I was not treating him liberally in the matter of odds, I can assure you.

I don't think, on the whole, any member of the Ring has made fewer mistakes than I have. I pride myself on not being 'done,' indeed; but 'done' I was once, as brown as brown could be—a saddle of mutton was nothing to it—and I am thoroughly ashamed to tell the story, I can assure you I am, really. 'Open confession is good for the soul,' however, they tell me, so 'here goes to begin,' as the showman says.

Of the many turfites I have been acquainted with in the course of my racing career, from the lord to the 'leg,' I never came

across one of whose shrewdness, worldly wisdom, and knowledge of his profession, I had formed a higher opinion of than ‘Old Tom Lomax,’ the well-known Newmarket trainer. Though he had never had a long string in his stable, yet either with his own or his employer’s horses he had brought off more big ‘handicap’ *coups* than any man breathing, and invariably in a quiet sort of way; the winner always starting at a long price, and a large sum being taken out of the ring. Whenever anything of Tom’s was in one of the big betting races, as was generally the case, I took very good care not to be very bad against it, in fact, very often turned round and backed it myself on the quiet. Once or twice, indeed, I made my book expressly for his representative, with most profitable results. This was all the more wonderful, seeing that he never told me a thing in his life, and I never asked him. It was simply a case of my intuitive knowledge coming in. Well, one year, not so very long ago either, on casting my eye down the entrances for the Cesarewitch, I noted, on looking to see what there was in the race trained by Tom Lomax, that he had three nags, viz., a three-year-old mare, named Dulcimer, belonging to Prince Sichatoff, the well-known Russian sportsman; an unnamed three-year-old of his own, known as the Honeysuckle Colt; and the third, a four-year-old, the Yellow Dwarf, which latter was entered, curiously enough, in his daughter’s name. The history of this trio was as follows: Dulcimer was a genuine stayer, and the winner of many races, and altogether so thoroughly exposed that she was bound to be harshly treated by the handicapper, and to be laid against accordingly. The Honeysuckle Colt had only run once as a two-year-old, when he had won his race. Since then he had gone amiss, and had never been, in consequence, sent along in earnest until now. He might be the best three-year-old in England, for ought I knew, and as he was pretty sure to get into the handicap with a light impost, it was just on the cards that he was one of Tom Lomax’s celebrated rods in pickle for the great long distance race. I at once put a cross against his name. As for Yellow Dwarf, he had run most indifferently as a two-year-old, not much better at three, and of the three races he had run as a four-year-old, though he had not been in by any means first-class company, he had not succeeded in winning one. A little under-sized brute, he would have no earthly chance whatever, not even if, as was very likely to be the case, the handicapper let him in with the lowest possible weight. And when

the acceptances came out, the weights on Tom Lomax's three representatives were pretty much as I thought they would be. To Dulcimer was allotted the top weight—9 st. 2 lb.; the Honeysuckle Colt had 7 st. 5 lb. to carry, and *Miss Lomax's* 'Yellow Dwarf' was right down at the bottom with 6 st. 1 lb. They all accepted, and when the betting began, I once more proved a prophet in my own country. Dulcimer was backed by a certain section of the public, who, bless their innocent hearts, never desert a good horse. The Honeysuckle Colt was pounced on by what is termed the clever division, who thought that, having got on to one of Tom Lomax's good things, they could help themselves accordingly; and occasionally a long shot was taken, goodness knows by whom—nobody seemed to know, and nobody seemed to care—about Yellow Dwarf. Like many others I fancied the Honeysuckle Colt myself, and I backed him at the long odds accordingly to make myself safe.

And so things went on, until the first October meeting. My information was that the Honeysuckle Colt was going like great guns, and would as nearly win as possible, I therefore trusted to luck as usual, and laid a bit extra against the leading favourites. As for Yellow Dwarf, so small an opinion had I of him, that I hardly took the trouble to inquire of my man if he was any good. However, I did. The reply, with an amused smile, as if he thought I was a booby for asking the question, being, 'Bless yer 'art, 'e aint no good. They calls him *Miss Lomax's pony*, and well they might, for she's a-galloping of him about the 'eath or the lime-kilns 'arf the blessed day. It do make me larf,' wound up my talented tout, 'to see her a-racin' that blessed Yaller Dwarf about, perish me if it don't. What did the old 'un enter it for in the Siefertitch? Why, cos she *told* 'im to, to be shewer, the young wixen. Bless you, if she was to go and say to old Tom, "You jest henter that Newfoundland dawg o' mine, or that there Tortershell cat as I'm ser fond of, in the Darby," strike me twisted if I don't b'lieve the hold man ud do it. Talk about influence! Well I never *did*, there!' And by way of expressing more forcibly than by words, his profound contempt for this unnatural case of paternal weakness, my informant, having first removed the straw that ornamented his mouth, expectorated with much vehemence.

It was beautiful weather during that 'first October,' I recollect, and I enjoyed my early morning ride about the heath, on one of Mr. Chennell's hacks, immensely. When I turned out

about half past seven o'clock on the Tuesday morning, I ascertained the fact that Tom Lomax had just passed through the town on his way to the racecourse side ; so, being anxious to have a look at the Honeysuckle Colt, away I started in the same direction, and, galloping along, soon came across Tom sitting on his hack all by himself, peering through his glasses at some horses in the distance. Turning his head as I appeared, he hailed me with, 'Come and stand here, my Siezerwitch horses 'll be here directly !' Here they come !' he exclaimed, 'Jim Crow leading, then old Dulcimer, and Honeysuckle next.' 'Honeysuckle goes well, don't he ?' he added, as the Cesarewitch favourite passed us, nearly pulling his boy out of the saddle.

'And who's the young lady ?' I asked, as, just in the wake of the three nags, there came tearing along, going like a steam-engine, if I may use the simile, a little dark brown horse, clothed like the rest, with, instead of a boy, a very charming girl on his back, who greeted the trainer with a merry laugh and a flourish of her whip as she passed, in answer to his shout of '*Keep your hands down, Miss !*'

'The young lady ?' he answered, turning to me ; 'why that's my daughter, that is, and that's *her* Siezerwitch horse she's on, Yellow Dwarf.' 'I say,' he added in an undertone, a look of paternal pride that I really could not adequately describe overspreading his wooden old countenance, '*Ain't she a young Devil, eh ?*'

'Well, really I don't know,' replied I, laughing ; 'but she is a very lovely girl, there's no doubt about *that*, anyway.'

'So she is, so she is,' replied the fond parent ; 'but she's a young devil for all that, and so you'd say, if you knew her as well as I do. Made me enter that blessed pony of hers in the Siezerwitch, though he's got no more chance than a man in mud boots, and says she means to back him to win a fortune as well, and it's my belief she will too. She's got some money of her own her poor mother left her,' continued Tom, shaking his head sorrowfully, 'and the way she's a going on with it you'll hardly believe.' And then he added, as if wishing to get rid of a sore subject, 'You must be feeling hungry by this time, I'm sure ; you'd better come and take breakfast with us, and make my gal's acquaintance.'

He was right, I *did* feel hungry, as who does not after an early gallop on Newmarket Heath ? So, gladly accepting his invitation, we turned our horses' heads and followed the now

pulling up racehorses in the direction of Eclipse House, as the domicile of the trainer was styled.

They know how to breakfast at Newmarket, and the meal I partook of was quite up to the mark. Even if it had not have been, I shall not forget it in a hurry, that is very certain. Another thing, too. Before the end of it I had quite arrived at the conclusion in my own mind that, in describing his daughter as a 'young devil,' Tom Lomax was if anything below the mark.

'Yes,' she exclaimed, after the Cesarewitch had been discussed in all its bearings, 'there's only one horse in the race, and that's Yellow Dwarf.'

Her father at this went into a perfect paroxysm of laughter, and hid his face under the table.

'Oh, yes, you may laugh to your heart's content,' said she, with much scorn, and a defiant toss of her pretty head; 'I mean what I say, I can tell you.' Then she turned to me, the artful puss, 'Don't pay any attention to dad, poor silly old thing, will you, Mr. Mopus,' she said pleadingly.

'Certainly not,' laughed I.

'I'm very fond of my dear little Yellow Dwarf,' she continued; 'I entered him for the Cesarewitch; I've trained him for the Cesarewitch; and now I mean to back him for the Cesarewitch.'

I thought her father would have had a fit at this point, for he was absolutely purple in the face with suppressed laughter.

'Mr. Mopus,' she continued—she was angry now, I could see—'I repeat, I want to back my horse, *my* horse, you understand? You have a book, I know, and I believe the market price is 100 to 1, is it not?'

I nodded acquiescence.

'Very well, will you lay me those odds?'

'Well, I suppose I can't well refuse you, Miss Lomax,' I replied.

Her father was now endeavouring apparently to gag himself with a large crimson handkerchief, and was by this time a sort of indigo in colour about the face.

'To what I please?' she inquired.

'Oh, yes!' I replied airily, thinking she meant probably a fiver, or at most a tanner.

'Oh, thank you so much, so very much!' she exclaimed. Then, jumping up from her seat, she thrust something crumpled up into my hand, and, crying out, 'This is what I want *on*,

please ; don't forget I've paid you, will you ? ' bolted out of the room. At the same instant old Tom Lomax, starting from his chair, and rushing to the window, exclaimed :

' There are those d—d boys of mine at it again ! I'll give it 'em ! ' and, grasping his hunting whip, bolted out of the room too. I looked out of the window, and couldn't see the ghost of a boy. Then I looked at the notes Miss Lomax had placed in my hands. One glance was sufficient ; and, as I am a living sinner, they were three notes of a hundred pounds each. I had actually laid thirty thousand pounds to three hundred against Yellow Dwarf for the Cesarewitch, and it might be—it *might* be—and the very thought of it made me feel quite sick—one of Tom Lomax's good things.

' Oh, I must speak to the young lady at once. I'm not going to stand all that, I'm hanged if I do,' I said to myself.

I bolted out of the house in my turn, just in time to see my lady driving out of the yard in a very smart dog-cart. She caught sight of me, and kissed her hand gaily.

' Where was Mr. Lomax ? ' I asked one of the lads.

' He's just galloped off on his hack, to see the Prince, sir, and told me to tell you not to wait,' replied the boy.

It was a plant, the whole business—a plant, for a hundred—a thousand—a million ! It was about time for *me* to go now ; so, I called for my hack, and made tracks for the town, and at once paid a visit to the rooms. Oh, it was all I could do to prevent myself tearing my hair from very vexation. When I got there, and put out a gentle feeler about Tom Lomax's lot, I found that they were taking 100 to 6 about Yellow Dwarf all over the place. A genuine commission had been thrown into the market only a quarter of an hour before, they told me, and the four-year-old was evidently the chosen one of the stable. Oh, yes, I had been had on toast with a vengeance.

And did Miss Lomax's pony win the Cesarewitch ? I should just about think he did ; and the awful—the frightful sacrifice I had to make, in order to get out, was something too dreadful to think of.

' It was too bad of you, Tom, that it was,' said I to the trainer reproachfully, when I met him in the birdcage after the race.

' Lor' bless you, it wasn't *me*,' he replied, endeavouring entirely unsuccessfully to put on an expression of innocence ; ' it was that gal of mine's doing, not mine. I told you she was a young devil, didn't I, now ? '

'You did, certainly,' I replied with some bitterness.

'And wasn't I right?'

'Well, you weren't far wrong,' I replied.

Yes, it will be a long while, a very long while, before I forget 'My daughter's pony.'

'THE WIZARD WOODCOCK.'

By 'ROCKWOOD.'



IT'S coom, and we'll have no luck whatever.'

'Who has come?' was our query to this remark of our old keeper, as we stood under the shelter of the trees close to the lower lake of Windermere, and contemplated the scenery which delighted Wordsworth, and other of the Lake poets, and charmed the author of *The Isle of Palms*, better known perhaps to sporting readers for his 'Fyttes' in his *Sporting Jacket*: Christopher North himself.

'The Witch Woodcock;' said the old fellow, with a frightened look.

'*Witch* woodcock! you old superstitious fool, there can be no such thing; you'll be talking of a gander of a woman directly.'

'Well, *wizard* then;' was his reply, 'just as you care, sir; but *he* or *she* it's no canny.'

'What has it done? and where is it to be seen? can't I have a shot at it?'

'It would be no usc, sir; no use whatever. I've fired almost twenty shots at it myself, and I'm as good with a gun as any man hereabouts, but it ain't no use, I might as well fire at its shadow.'

'Were you sober when you fired at it first?'

'Well, sir; I might have had a drop of beer at the "Old England," over there at Bowness, but not much, nothing at least, to purwent my stopping of a woodcock, at any rate.'

'Well, then; were you sober the second time it was flushed?'

'Well, sir; you be a queer one, you be, but to tell you the truth, sir, I was a bit afeerd of it the second time, and jist took the boat and went across to have a little drop, for courage like, to the "Crown;" for, Lord love you, sir, witches as is woodcocks

are not to be trifled with, I tell you. I have often heard them say that they are the ghaists of poachers who have been hanged for shooting gamekeepers, and which, sir, if that is the case, makes it deed nigh certain that this one is just the speerit of old Joe Lamenby, from Kendal, who was hanged for shooting of a keeper up Troutbeck way.'

'Why didn't you try a few silver slugs at him?'

'Try silver slugs at him! God bless you, I've fired two weeks' wages at this one, and it never seems to do him any harm. That, sir, I can vouch for. Just you ax the waiter at the "Old England" if it ain't right. Now you can have a try if you like, sir; but mind, every time you shoot at him you bring some sort of a calamity, some sort of a devilish cantrip on the place. Oh, it's the truth I'm telling you. One time I missed it, a man up Ambleside way took a fit and died; another time, a woodman at Wray Castle did na clear out of the way of a tree in time, and had his leg broken by the fallen branches, and a third time, my pig took measles. It's a chancy thing, sir, I tell you, shooting at it, and if you'll take my advice, ye'll let him alane.'

'What! a woodcock so early in the season, and let him alone; no, not even were he the very devil himself. Come, lead the way to where he was flushed, and I will try him with an ounce and an eighth of No. 6 shot. If he don't come down to that, then, as the departed spirit of an old poacher, I hope he may give all the pigs on the side of Windermere the measles.'

'Well, I warn you, sir;' said the old fellow, who was superstitious about everything, and believed that he was thrown in the final tie once, at the annual competition amongst border wrestlers, because he had seen but one magpie on the road to Kendal; 'if your gun bursts, or you should hear of anything happening to me afterwards, you will remember my words of warning.'

'Lead on!' was my remark, 'I never saw ghost yet, that could stand powder and shot, with a good man behind the gun, and I am not going to believe in one now.'

Windermere Lake is at no time more lovely than in late Autumn, or early Winter, when the sky is clear, the atmosphere frosty, and the mingled masses of coloured foliage, the red of the beech, the orange of the chestnut, and the pale yellow of the birch, are all mirrored in its glassy surface. Business may be deserted, its boats, which have carried hundreds of tourists out and in, in the summer time, may be drawn up on the

gravel beach, and the char fishers have laid aside their tackle, yet it delights the sporting Rambler, who cares not for the company of the modern holiday seeker, who goes, guide book in hand, with the particular passages marked down at which he is to give vent to his notes of exclamation and admiration. Every peak, or 'pike' (as the mountain spurs are termed in Lake country language) we gaze upon has been written about by Southey, Coleridge, or Wordsworth; and the great Sir Walter Scott himself loved the clear Land of Lakes only a little less than his own loved Land of Cakes. In the beloved country of Ruskin, it will possibly be considered by many an act of sacrilege to fire a gun on the very shores of the little fresh-water sea, but the Westmoreland men, be it remarked, are all true sportsmen, and what hunting man lives, who, if he did not ken John Peel, has not heard the song of that name.

'Langdale;' I said, to the old keeper, who was leading the way along the lake-side, 'have you not come to his favourite boxing ground yet?'

'Well, sir;' said the old fellow, 'I missed him past that hornbeam tree there, twice, I don't mind telling you, but he's not a *common* woodcock, this, and what makes me more certain that he is old Joe Lamenby's ghost, is, that he seems to know every bit of the woods, and shifts about from place to place in a most wonderful fashion.'

'Indeed! did old Joe take a drop now and then at the "Old England," like yourself, for it strikes me this woodcock of yours is fond of settling very near the place; maybe, perhaps, because he knows you are safer with your gun after you have made your call there?'

'Maybe, sir;' said the old man, 'but you jist keep a good look out while I send the dog into these hazels. This was a favourite place of his at one time, and I have flushed him here and missed him, more than once. There you are, sir; mark!!!'

Yes; there was Mister Long Bill, sure enough, going over the tops of the hazels, with his usual peculiar *zig-zag* flight. I followed him quickly with the right, but he jerked the very moment I pulled the trigger, and I missed him. With the left I was on him, as I thought, in an instant, but he jerked again, and my second shot went for nothing. I re-loaded, muttering some very bad language, I am afraid, and my temper was not improved by Langdale's remarks.

'What about the "Old England" ale, now, sir; it ain't so strong as it used to be, perhaps?'

'Well, I don't know;,' I said, 'but I am certain of this, that I won't touch a drop of it till I have killed that woodcock, ghost or no ghost, I hope you have marked him down.'

'Oh, yes; I've marked him down, in the centre of the very thickest bit of cover on the side of Windermere. Don't you mistake as to its being an ordinary woodcock. Ordinary woodcocks are not so particular in settling down, as you know, when they are first flushed. However, you may get a second snap at him, and if you like, I can cut up a sixpence to make slugs.'

'Oh, hang your slugs and your sixpences! I was only joking. If No. 6 shot can't stop him, then as Joe Lamenby's ghost, let him spend his days and nights in peace on these wooded hill-sides.'

'Just have your way,' said the old man, who, I could see, secretly rejoiced at my non-success; 'but if anything happens to anybody, don't you blame me, that's all.'

'Go on! I'll have the trail of Joe Lamenby's ghost for dinner to-morrow, or I'll never handle a gun again.'

It was quite true, as the keeper remarked, that the woodcock I had missed was a good judge of thickets; and that in which it settled down seemed to be impenetrable to both man and dog. Keeping on the outside, and to leeward, I watched for him very carefully, while the old man and the dog bustled and rattled about so as to flush him.

'Mark!' came the cry again, and I saw him skim the highest of the trees. Bang, bang; went my right and left, but away he went, evidently unscathed.

'Have you got him, sir?' came from the centre of the cover.

'No-o!' was my shout, as I followed him with my eye, and saw him settle amongst some briars and bracken, far up the hill-side.

'Well; if you had been drinking some of that "Old England" ale, I might ha' thought you could have missed him, like myself. However, you have had your try, and you'll see what will happen. Don't you be blaming it on me, that's all!'

I did not deign to answer him, but held on up the hill to the little clump of briars and brackens amongst which I had marked down my little gentleman with the very long bill. Four shots at a woodcock, and not bag him, was more than I could stand.

and I was determined to have him, more especially as the bird had been given a local history, and the old gamekeeper would let it be known from one end of Westmoreland to another, how I had two splendid chances, and failed to bring him down. Of course, from his erratic flight, the woodcock will bother sometimes the very best of shots, as he is often just where he should have been when the shot is sent after him, and so throws one out. In the open, as grouse-shots who have come across him in the heather, he is easily bowled over, easier, indeed, than an old cock grouse. If I missed him then, when flushed from the briars and brackens, he was undoubtedly something more than mere flesh and feathers. With a beating heart, and my finger on the trigger, I knocked upon the briars with the barrels of my gun. A rabbit rushed out and scampered down the hill, but of course, it did not tempt me; I raised a stone and flung it in, and—Flip, flap, flip—*bang*; down came Mr. Longbill on the grass thirty yards off. In triumph I rushed down hill with it in my hand to the old keeper, who, however, refused to touch it, and jumped back when it gave its last convulsive flutter. Put it in the bag he would not, so I carried it myself to the edge of the lake, where our boat lay, and put it on board. On entering the "Old England," I handed it to the old waiter with the remark that it was to be cooked for dinner next day. There was a grin on the old fellow's face as Langdale whispered to him what it was, which plainly let me know that the old fellow knew some secret connected with the bird. In the smoking room, thawed with a glass of grog, he let it out.

'Yes, sir; I'm very sorry you've shot that bird, as it was always worth a shilling or two to me about this time o' year. You see, Langdale used to call in and have a drop before firing at it, the more so after he began to get afraid of it. Well, he used to bring some other keepers down along with him, and they'd give me a half-crown piece to smash to pieces with the cleaver, and I would load their guns for them.'

'And you?'

'Put the half-crowns in my pocket, and loaded their guns with hard white peas,' he said, with a laugh.

Next day, I had my bird for dinner, and never relished anything better than the trail on toast of the *Wizard Woodcock*.

ADVENTURE WITH A SKUNK.

By 'STORMCOCK.'



WE were encamped on Lake Storr, near Erie—forming one of a chain of lakes connecting the Cuyhaoga River with it—and were dealing death day by day to the big bass, bullheads, perch, sunfish, and bull-frog of the neighbourhood, besides getting many a shot at the ubiquitous blue heron. In fact, we were enjoying ourselves, as only the campers out in these odoriferous North American forests can do; surrounded, as we were, by plenteous game and fish, and blessed with the perfection of weather, with only one drawback, the sanguinary mosquitoes.

On this particular afternoon the very spirit of laziness possessed both Sidney Harper, my partner in the excursion, and myself; and for a wonder the 'skeeturs' didn't trouble us much. A comfortable breeze was blowing, our hammocks were swinging from the boles of great towering sable-plumed balsams, and after the regulation *siesta* we both lay blandly smoking our meerschaums and enjoying the *dolce far niente*. Our only attendant, a boy about fifteen, 'Dabs,' we called him, lay dozing also in the kitchen tent; and, as this story chiefly concerns Dabs, perhaps I had better introduce the gentleman formally before proceeding further with this veracious history.

Dabs, whose real name was James Crossly, was a little English ragamuffin once, and a London one at that. Dabs had blacked my boots at Ludgate Hill Railway-station, and subsequently followed me as my henchman in all my wanderings. What his age was, or indeed now is, I can't positively affirm, but I put it at fifteen on the occasion referred to, and this maybe is a year or two too young. He is bright, and intelligent, and truthful—rare merits in a servant, but, alas! Dabs is curious to learn about everything, and in the pursuance of this craving the distinctions between *meum* and *tuum* are not always plain to his mind. For example, Dabs has only quite recently known the taste of maple syrup, and now I can't keep it in camp, it goes so fast. My rifle is also a fearful and wonderful source of

fascination to Dabs. Handle it he must, and I am ever apprehensive that some harm may happen to the incorrigible young sportsman. The simplicity and credulousness of this young Arab from the Big City are, however, abounding, and at this moment, though he is ostensibly asleep, I am certain he has been listening to the yarns Sid Harper has been rattling off concerning his Texan career as a cowboy, and believing it all, as I do—not.

So impressed was I that Dabs had been auditor that I invented a little fiction anent maple syrup, which effectually, as it turned out, kept Dabs from the syrup-can for a long time.

‘Sid,’ said I, ‘how much syrup was there left when you looked last night?’

‘About a gallon,’ was the reply, ‘and if Dabs lets it alone it will last, if not we must go without presently.’

‘By the bye,’ I remarked in my ordinary story-telling manner, ‘did ever I tell you where I got that syrup? No? Oh, I got it from a family of Indians on the Cayuga River—a last remnant they were of the Objibways of this part. I bought ten gallons of it, and was pleased to get it because of its exceeding purity of appearance. Do you know how they refine it?’

‘No, I never heard; put bullock’s blood into it, or pieces of fresh flesh maybe—that’s what we did to our liquor out west,’ said Sid.

‘No, they employ far more extreme measures than that,’ I went on (Dabs I could see was listening with both ears and mouth now). ‘After they have boiled the sap sufficiently they procure a young hound puppy of no worth to keep, and throw it into the boiling syrup and force it under. Of course it is soon dead, and it is left to boil there until it bursts asunder. Fact, I assure you, and the worst of it is they generally feed the pup to repletion before they put it to this purpose.’

There was a suppressed movement of Dabs during this recital of horrors, and suddenly, as I finished, he jumped up and darted out among the trees. The yarn had been too strong for a weak stomach. But he left the syrup alone after that, and this was a blessing in a country where it is such a luxury.

After supper—as tea is called in the backwoods—Sid and I determined to go some two miles to a farmhouse, where eggs

and milk could be obtained, not to mention a good drink of cider. Before starting I called Dabs.

'Now, look ye here, Dabs,' I said, 'don't meddle with my Winchester, nor Mr. Harper's shot gun. If you must shoot squirrels, do it with the little pea rifle, and be careful.'

'All right, sir,' was the eager reply, and we departed.

Oh, the pleasure of walking through those fragrant woods after a hot day in summer! The balsamic odours that penetrate you seem also to invigorate and send the blood dancing along its veins with frolic energy. Here and there the squirrels danced up into the trees, the wood-peckers of various hues were busy tapping the trees for worms and insects, and one also had the satisfaction of feeling that there was no restriction on him. Here the game, whatever it was—rabbit, squirrel, deer, or the birds of the air and the fish of the water—were as much yours as anybody's, provided you, sought them in a sportsmanlike manner. Feeling thus, and gaily laughing at Dabs' late horror, we soon got our eggs and milk, and were equally as soon on the way back.

'Let's see what the sapient Dabs is doing,' said Sid, stepping from tree to tree, and motioning me to do likewise. 'We'll surprise him if he is at the syrup-can again.'

'No fear of that,' I replied, and we hastened our progress to the tents. But no Dabs was visible. He had gone a-hunting, as a cursory examination showed, but the pea rifle was returned to its place and the shot gun was missing.

'Confound the young rascal!' I exclaimed, annoyed at being so persistently disobeyed, and fearing some harm to my new 'hammerless' rather than to the boy. 'We'll run him down, and give him a good taste of stick for that. Come on.'

I cut a little twig, knowing full well that my wrath would never remain warm enough to countenance the putting of the threat into execution, and we set out to find Dabs. We called and scouted nearly a mile, but no Dabs could be found.

Presently Sid uttered an exclamation, and drew me back behind a tree. Right in front of us sat Dabs, with the gun resting across his knees and sheltered by a bush, evidently waiting for some game he had sighted to pass. We also resolved to see the result. Presently Dabs raised the gun to his shoulder, and, after what seemed an interminable long time aiming, bang! bang! came from the two barrels almost

simultaneously, and Dabs lay sprawling, knocked back by the recoil of the gun. He had pulled off both barrels in his nervous excitement. We shouted, and hastened up. Much surprised, Dabs rose up with a scramble.

'I killed him, sir; there he is!' he cried out, 'a great black-and-white rabbit,' and he was off towards the creature which lay writhing in the agonies of death some thirty yards off.

We saw Dabs approach it with some impetuosity, and then suddenly recoil.

'Oh, it ain't a rabbit, and it's been an' squirted some stinking stuff all over me,' whimpered Dabs.

I looked at Sid, and Sid looked with a sad and solemn look at me. Then we laughed till the woods echoed. Dabs had killed a skunk, and it had discharged the contents of its scent-bag over him.

Be thankful, O stay-at-home reader, that you know not this most unpleasant of all quadrupeds—the skunk. If the rank odour, with its pungent and offensive fumes, once gets on your clothes or your person, you may indeed and verily wash yourself with nitre, and take to yourself much soap, but the smell will yet remain. We made the odoriferous Dabs come after us at a respectable distance. We ordered him to strip when the lake was reached, and pile his clothes, boots, and cap, everything in a heap, threw him a box of matches, and bade him light up the bonfire; then we directed him to wash in the lake, and he was not allowed to emerge till nearly half a pound of soap had been used. After that I overhauled my clothes-box, and found him wearing apparel sufficiently commodious for those haunts only of backwoods-men. Notwithstanding all these precautions, however, he still reminded one of skunk! We smelt it in our food, in our tobacco, and we tasted the odour even in our coffee; and as for poor Dabs nothing will ever persuade him to touch maple syrup or my 'hammerless' double again in the hope of shooting rabbits. The very mention of skunk to him is worse than the glitter of water to the mad dog.

THE LITTLE GREY MARE.

By 'TOM MARKLAND.'

IN blithe Suffolk, the scene of John Barleycorn's reign,
 Erst the home of the stalwart East Anglian Dane,
 Where the ploughmen are many, but pastures are rare,
 Lived John Dawkins, my friend, and his 'Little Grey Mare.'
 Lately John had grown poorer, for times had been bad,
 But he'd hunt all the same, if a hunt could be had.
 'Tho', quoth John, 'I'm nigh ruined, a truce to dull care
 If they leave but the farm and my Little Grey Mare.'
 All the corn he had garnered was winnowed and sold,
 And he owned that the 'outlook' was 'wonderful' cold.
 There remained but three weeks to St. Martinmas Day,
 When poor John had a precious attorney to pay;
 'Twas for money advanced on an old bill of sale,
 And Redtape would foreclose if the int'rest should fail.
 Altho' lost in 'brown studies'—aye, many a score—
 Think as hard as he would he was puzzled the more,
 For twice two make but four, and you can't make it five,
 It would puzzle the smartest financier alive.
 So our yeoman in spirits felt wretchedly 'down'
 When he dined after market at 'Woodberry Crown,'
 For next morn he expected his writ-serving friend—
 Then his hunting and dining would come to an end.
 In his dumps he neglected to pass round the wine,
 Which, of course, let him in for the usual fine;
 With a slap on the back from a 'broth of a boy,'
 Who could wine, wit, and company fully enjoy.
 So John plucked up his spirits and filled up his glass,
 Then toasted his mare, as he hadn't a lass.
 Faster travelled the 'rosy,' the talk grew more gay,
 Till his dismal forebodings quite vanished away.
 When a start was suggested 'twas always in vain,
 For the landlord declared it was pouring with rain.
 The carousal went on' till the truth became clear
 'Twas 'set in for the night,' which was now drawing near.
 So they parted—our hero, of course, to repair
 To the stable in quest of the Little Grey Mare.
 He had stalled half-a-dozen in days that were past,
 But the grey was the fav'rite—the grey was the last;
 And it flashed on his mind, as he managed to mount,
 She should stable that night with his neighbour, Tom Blount.

Though 'twas little John Dawkins had learnt of the law,
He determined to keep his mare out of its claw.
Through the storm he just heard the old stableman shout,
'You'll take care at the ford, sir—the waters are out !'
'That's all right, man !' roars John, in his offhanded way,
Then he started for home on the tight little grey.
Now the wind and the rain made John's notions more clear,
He thought more of that ford as the stream he drew near,
For the Saxendine brook crossed the road at the place,
And when swollen this brook went the deuce of a pace.
As our hero came up from the Woodberry side
He drew rein to take thought ere he plunged in the tide,
And, thinks John, if the pair of us don't want to drown,
We had better return to the 'Woodberry Crown.'
This was wise, but the schemes of the mice and the men
Have been foiled through all ages—it happened so then ;
For a wild, piercing shriek rent the turbulent air,
Which quite altered the plans of our well-meaning pair.
When John turned to discover the cause of affright,
Through the whirl of the waters and uncertain light
He saw some one borne down by the merciless stream—
In a brief glimpse of moonlight a white arm saw gleam.
Down the bank at a gallop rode John in a trice,
Made a dash for the middle without thinking twice.
'Twas a lady borne past him. John managed to grasp
A loose fold of her mantle ; but weak was the clasp
Which confined it in front, but gave way at the strain—
In a moment the lady was drifting again.
Then John plunged from his saddle, his strokes strongly plied,
Till at last he was close at the fair lady's side ;
And just when she was sinking to come up no more,
She was borne by our hero in safety to shore.
I've no need to relate how in time she 'came round,'
How the little grey mare with no trouble was found,
How she carefully John and the rescued one bore,
Till they reached with glad welcome his wide-open door.
This was quite in due course, just as matters should go,
But it lasted too long for John Dawkins, I know.
Ere the lady was safe in his sister's kind arms,
She had wrought fearful havoc with John by her charms.
On a sudden she cried, in an accent of fear,
'Oh, how selfish I've been ! Is my father not here ?
Pray, sir ! send out some searchers, and mind that you say
Whatsoever their charges Miss Redtape will pay.
We were crossing the ford, when the track he mistook,
And I fear he's been drowned in the Saxendine brook.'



"John managed to grasp"

Illustration

John said ne'er a word, but he hurried away,
 With what men he could muster, with little delay.
 Oh, how thankful *she'll* feel, thought poor John when he found
 That his much-dreaded creditor had not been drowned.
 At their joyous reunion you well can conceive
 How the lawyer was touched; you can also believe
 That the debt was annulled, and in course of a year,
 When the day of John's marriage was drawing full near
 With the daughter he'd saved from the Saxendine wave,
 He came down with his dust in a manner so brave,
 That there's plenty once more in John Dawkins' old halls,
 And more mounts than the 'Little Grey Mare' in the stalls.

CAMPING OUT.

AN ASCOT EXPERIENCE.

By NATHANIEL GUBBINS.

I WISH it to be quite understood at the outset, that I am a man of simple tastes, and moderation in all things: and the fact of my choosing a dry ditch on Bagshot Heath, on the night before—or, rather, on the morning of—Isonomy's Ascot Cup must not be taken as evidence of a previous long linger over the wine-cup.

I was staying that summer in the peaceful and picturesque little town of Dorking; and the ordinary *route* to Ascot, at that time, was *via* Guildford and Wokingham. Unfortunately for myself, there had been opened in this very week, 'another way,' *via* Woking, of which I had no cognisance; and when, after dining with a friend who was staying close to the Royal Heath on the Wednesday evening, I sought out the last train to Dorking *via* Wokingham, what could have been more natural than for an energetic, though weary-looking, porter to usher me into a Woking train?

I had not been long in that train, after it had proceeded on its way, when it became evident that 'some one had blundered.' We passed and stopped at stations whose names bore no resemblance to those with which I had become acquainted that morning. And when we came to a halt at Frimley, beyond Camberley, suspicion had become a certainty. I was in the wrong train.

The Frimley stationmaster, to whom I at once confided my misfortune, was kindly and sympathetic.

‘How extremely unlucky, my dear sir!’ exclaimed that worthy. ‘The last train to Guildford and Dorking left this station only a minute and a half ago.’

’Twas ever thus. All through life, I have been a minute and a half too late.

But it was of no use proceeding further in the wrong train. The only course open to me was to find a decent lodging for the night in Frimley, and to proceed back again to Ascot in the morning. But this arrangement was easier determined upon than accomplished. Every spare bed in the village had been secured, for the race week, ages before; so, after refreshing the inner man, I had to proceed—and on foot, too, as there was no conveyance to be hired in the neighbourhood—further afield. There was just the chance of a night’s repose being obtainable at the Duke of York hotel—some three miles distant—which stands just outside the gates of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst (out of which seminary I had passed, with more or less distinction, some fifteen years before). So I set out for that once well-known (to myself) hostelry.

It was a lovely June night. The moon was nearly at her full, and the firmament was thickly spangled with stars. As I walked along, I mused upon many things—a succession of ‘seconds’ backed that afternoon on the course, the easy triumph of Strathern over thirty opponents in the Royal Hunt Cup, and the uses to which I would have put the one thousand sovereigns landed had Lord Clive only finished first instead of second. I thought also upon—and I am sorry to say cursed—the ill fortune which had tempted me into the wrong train. All of a sudden, it occurred to me, most vividly, that I had been tempted into the wrong road as well.

It was a certainty I had been ‘left,’ again. In another half mile or so, there I was, standing on that part of Bagshot Heath, known to me in the old surveying days at college, as ‘Chobham Ridges,’ on the direct road to London, through Bagshot, Sunningdale, and Egham. As a distant church clock struck the hour of midnight, the reflection came that for once in a way I had been favoured with ‘the key of the street’; that to retrace my steps would be folly, as there was not likely to be any sort of welcome for the belated traveller in any inn, at that hour of the night; and that I was fully entitled to seek repose upon

any portion of that once happy hunting-ground for the highwayman.

I was not long in making my selection. A deep, dry ditch, half-filled with the leaves of past years, hard by a little copse of beeches and Scotch firs, seemed quite a ready-made resting-place. Consideration for an 'Ascot suit,' once the pride of Savile Row, or for one of Lincoln and Bennett's masterpieces, was out of the question. Folding up my dust-coat for a pillow, and placing tall hat and umbrella within easy reach, in case some highwayman should call during the small hours, I was soon on the broad of my back, secure from observations from the roadway, staring up into the star-spangled vault of the infinite, being lulled into slumber by the soft liquid notes of the nightingales. For once in a way I was a 'dosser' beneath what the gipsies call 'the big blue blanket.'

I must have slept at least four hours, for day had dawned, when I was gradually recalled to consciousness by what at first appeared to be a confused babble of voices. As I became fully awake, I caught the words—

'—a red* soup-t'reen as big as a bloomin' bawth!'

I lay close in my ditch, out of sight, as still as a dog fox in covert; and by the direction whence the sounds came, could make out that two men were in earnest conversation in the copse close by.

Hush!

'But why not to-night, Bill?' asked the other man.

'You silly jay!'† exclaimed the first speaker, with an oath. 'Why not to-night, indeed! Cos to-night won't be no conjure,‡ that's why. This arternoon they'll all be at the races, old man, gals, coachman, flunkies—everybody except the butler, as is applepexic or somethink.'

'And the atepla (plate) is 'all marked?'

'Straight. Ain't I piped it off§ through the pantry winder!'

Evidently burglary was in the air! Once more, hush!

'Seems to me,' continued the first ruffian, who, from the smell, I knew was lighting his pipe with a lucifer, 'as we cawn't go wrong over this job. I've spotted the drum|| this

* Criminal synonym for 'golden.'

† 'Jay' or 'juggins' signifies, in thieves' slang, a 'fool,' 'simpleton,' formerly 'flat' or 'mug.'

‡ Won't be any use.

§ To pipe off='to observe,' 'to take stock of.'

|| 'Marked down the house.'

three week, an' if ever there was a time to do a bust* it's this 'ere very arternoon, when the family's a tomfoolin' of it at Arskit.'

'S'posin' as they should come back afore we've got away with the stuff?'

'S'pose yer gran'mother! Ain't we got our chives (knives)?'

The morning was warm enough, but I couldn't suppress a shiver. The diabolical villains!

'What's the name o' the drum, did yer say, Bill?' asked the second speaker.

'Why, Cambritsh Lodge. Ever bin by it?'

'Not me. 'Ow far from the course?'

''Bout two mile or so.'

And as their voices grew fainter and fainter, I knew that they were moving across the heath in the same direction that I wished to go; so I let them get well out of sight—to wash or to make any sort of toilet was, of course, out of the question—and then started on a tramp back to Ascot. My duty was quite clear—to find out Cambridge Lodge, wherever it might be, and warn the occupants.

It was past six o'clock when I entered the trim little villa-village of Sunningdale, beloved of the retired army officer as a place of residence, and of the city merchant who has made his 'pile.' Possibly this peaceful spot was to be the scene of a sanguinary burglary in a few hours' time?

I was half way through the village, gazing from left to right, the while looking at the names of the houses, when I espied a housemaid—evidently a delightfully early riser—busily engaged in whitening the front door-steps of a desirable villa residence. She was a dark-eyed, trim-figured young woman, and looked delightfully natty in her pink print morning dress and dainty little mob cap; and I made bold to address her.

'God morning, my dear'—a housemaid is always 'my dear' both on or off the stage. 'Can you kindly direct me to Cambridge Lodge?'

'Why, o' course I can,' was the reply.

'Tell me, then, pretty one,' I implored, coming a little closer to the step-cleaner.

'A done, now! Give over! The idea! Keep your distance, young man, if you please.'

My Ascot suit evidently did not impress her much. She

* 'Commit a burglary.'

probably took me for a book-agent, or, possibly for the Queen's Taxes.

'Our people was dining there on'y last night,' continued the housemaid. 'Second turning to the right, young man, an' it's the large red 'ouse with the rhodedemblum in front—Colonel Skinner—second turning—you're quite welcome, young man.' And she turned once more to her steps.

The spectacle of a pallid, blear-eyed individual, unwashed, unbrushed, unshorn, decidedly dirty, and of 'raffish' appearance, dusty all over, was not exactly calculated to inspire confidence in any respectable household; still, I rang the bell boldly enough at the front door of Cambridge Lodge—a capacious, solidly built mansion, standing in well-kept grounds.

After an interval the door was opened by a sleepy-looking page in a striped linen jacket; his presence wafted odours of blacking and boot varnish into the sweet morning air.

'Colonel Skinner at home?' I demanded.

'I'll see, mister,' replied the youth, calling, ''Ere, James! somebody as wants to see master!'

'Then 'e *cawn't* see 'im, and that's all about it,' observed a coatless footman, appearing leisurely from the back regions.

'But my business is imperative,' I protested.

'Cawn't 'elp that. It's as much as my place is worth to call the Colonel afore eight, 'specially after a dinner-pawty. So you'll have to go away, that's all, an' come again after breakfast.'

'And at what hour is breakfast?'

'Awf past nine, or may be ten,' and he slammed the door in my face.

There was nothing for it but to go on to Ascot, look up the friend with whom I had dined on the previous evening, get a bath, a change, and breakfast, and return to Cambridge Lodge afterwards. So I once more took the road, and eventually reached the Royal Heath, in company with a nomadic crowd of habitual 'campers-out,' including gipsies, acrobats, conjurors, musicians, tramps of all sorts, and the rest, while the horses were still at exercise. And my presence among the motley assembly was, I well recollect, especially resented by a gigantic negro who, at that time, eked out a precarious existence by throwing small peeled wands in the direction of the sky until they disappeared from view.

'We don't want no broke-down swell in dis yer crowd,' said the brute, putting on a threatening attitude.

I told him I would first of all kick him hard on the shins, and then 'run him in,' and the bully 'wasn't taking any' more; but he could have broken me in two, had it pleased him to do so.

I was not long in finding out my friend, who is one of the most assiduous of amateur touts, as he is one of the heaviest of bettors.

'Great Scotland Yard!' was his salutation. 'Where in the world did you come from?'

'Spare your questions,' I replied hurriedly, 'and lead on to your ducal castle. I want a bath, food, and raiment, and a long drink—the last-named first of all.'

And oh! the joy of that brandy and soda, which positively hissed—so my friend said—like red-hot iron upon introduction to water, as it found its way adown my parched throttle.

After breakfast I took a cab back to Cambridge Lodge. The footman was more respectful this time, and the page had been smartened up, whilst the butler hovered in the background. Yes, I could see the Colonel, who presently appeared, after I had examined most of the photographs and other counterfeit presentiments in the morning room. Colonel Skinner was a stout, sallow-complexioned man, with an indifferently-thatched cranium. At first he did not appear to 'swallow' my tale with the avidity that I could have wished. In fact, the unpleasant conviction crept in upon me that I was regarded either as an escaped lunatic, or a member of the 'swell mob.'

'What?' he exclaimed, when I had finished a recital of my tale of horror. 'Burgle my house in broad daylight? You must be mistaken, sir; the thing's impossible.'

'I can only assure you once more, sir,' was my dignified rejoinder, 'that I overheard the full programme of the scoundrels, whilst lying in a dry ditch on Bagshot Heath, this very morning.'

This moved my host to laughter.

'In a ditch, eh? What, too much whiskey over-night? Quite sure you didn't dream all this, sir?'

I was naturally indignant.

'If you will do me the honour to glance at my card, Colonel, you will be sorry for having used the language of doubt, if not of insult, towards one, who, like yourself, has worn Her Majesty's uniform. I can only repeat that the plan of these burglars is to break in here, whilst you and your family are enjoying yourselves at the races, and when no manservant will be on the premises, except your apoplectic butler.'

'Apoplectic butler be hanged!' roared the gallant warrior.

‘Tompkinson has a neck almost as long as a stork’s, and looks more like dying of consumption—consumption of my best sherry—than of anything else. However, I owe you an apology, sir, and thank you for your information.’

I bowed.

‘To be forewarned,’ continued the Colonel, ‘is to be forearmed. We will start for Ascot this afternoon, but return by the back way unobserved; and when these scoundrels break in they’ll find that, instead of an apoplectic butler, they have to deal with one who has sabred Sikhs wholesale, at Chilianwallah—and who didn’t funk a Russian battery at Balaclava.’

My earnestness had convinced the veteran, who became quite civil—even hospitable. Nothing would satisfy him if I didn’t try his old brandy, and sample a new lot of Regalias, fresh from Benson’s. He introduced me to his daughter, a most bewitching *blonde*, and an only child. She was prettily nervous upon hearing of the contemplated burglary, and favoured me with a glance—a melting one—from her blue eyes, which seemed to say, ‘Stop and protect me with your heart’s best blood!’ The family pistols were looked up, the old Hussar sabre taken from its scabbard, and all the male domestics fully instructed as to the parts each was to take in the defence of the house. In fact, every preparation was made to give the bold bad burglars a particularly warm reception.

The colonel and his daughter both pressed me to stay to luncheon, and to take part in the subsequent proceedings. But my duty as a man and a citizen had been performed, so why linger longer on the scene? I made my *adieux*, returned to Ascot, and began the afternoon by taking 300*l.* to 18*l.* about Cipolata, who cantered in for the first race; following this success up with standing Sir Charles for a good stake for the ‘New.’

Of course it would have been more chivalrous and picturesque, and all that sort of thing, to have seen the burglary out; to have helped to fight the villains, and protected the plate, to say nothing of the bewitching *blonde*; to have heard the gallant colonel on his bended knee bless the intrepid youth who had been the means of saving all that was dear to him, including the gold soup tureen. And the intrepid youth would naturally have been rewarded with the hand and the 20,000*l.*—more or less—of the bewitching *blonde*; and the bells would have rung out merrily in Sunningdale.

But, unfortunately for the poetry of the thing, the intrepid

youth was already the proud possessor of a 'predominant partner' for life. And a stern regard for the truth compels me to add that the burglary of the Colonel's mansion never came off at all. True there was a burglary that afternoon at Cambridge Lodge, *Sunninghill*; and the burglars got away with a clean haul of plate. I had merely neglected to discover the fact that there was more than one Cambridge Lodge within easy reach of the Royal Heath; and instead of being blessed by Colonel Skinner, and rewarded with the hand of his fair daughter, I was rewarded with the following letter, which reached me at the club two days later:—

'Sir,—The next time you sleep in a ditch on Bagshot Heath, kindly dream something better worth dreaming. You have been the idiotic cause of our missing a delightful Cup Day; and my daughter has been in hysterics ever since—chiefly, I fancy, from being unable to disport herself within the Royal Enclosure in a new frock by Worth; and we have become the laughing-stock of the country round.

'D—— you!

'Your obedient servant,

'CLAUDE SKINNER,

'Late Colonel 23rd Hussars.

THE OTTER'S CHAIN.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.



REMARKABLE as we are for our insular feeling and studied reserve, a day's sport, spent in common, promotes a certain freemasonry that binds man to man more than anything else I know of. This impulse of sport courses through all of our veins, descended as we are from the ancient Briton, whom we respect. What with hunting the wolf, amongst other wild animals, painting himself blue, and occasionally thrashing his wife, he doubtless got through his time, and was probably a useful and ornamental savage. I take it that half our success in this world is owing to our love of hunting. The indulgence of this taste for a fine manly amusement, sharpens the faculties as well as the appetite, gives employment to thousands of poor men, brings the classes and masses together, all having



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Hit off the trail on the far bank.

one great object in view for the time being the enjoyment of sport.

Since the days of King John, there has been a scrambling foray against the otter with any kind of dog that would fight and take to the water. In those days he was looked upon as a thief and an outlaw, whose destruction had to be encompassed to rid the streams and rivers of a subtle plunderer. Fees—as much as five shillings, or the price of a bowl of punch—were paid in olden times by the churchwardens of country parishes when a fox or other marauder was killed within their boundaries. This custom obtained for many years in the Sinnington country, and there are one or two instances of it on record in the Cleveland country, some old entries in the parish accounts of Malton showing that on one or two occasions three and sixpence had been paid for foxes' masks. The payment by the Court Leet seems to have been a survival of the old Saxon laws against wolves and other nightly robbers of the fold, which would naturally be in force in a country where foxes are credited with taking a lamb or two now and again.

Up to a very recent date the otter had no friends, and was ruthlessly trapped or shot whenever man crossed his path, and in the local organs of the press we read exulting little paragraphs of how Mr. So-and-So shot the otter, and had him set up by the taxidermist as a lasting monument to his prowess. When, however, beauty and fashion looked the way of the otter, he was recognised as a worthy beast of the chase, and now he is as strictly preserved and hunted with as much science and fairness as the fox.

Spring being the season of otter-hunting, a very convenient wind-up to a winter's hound work is thus obtained, as the sport comes at a slack period of the year, when there is neither shooting or hunting. All sportsmen located in the district gladly join in the chase, and swell the ranks of those keen votaries who swear by the otter. Again, in the autumn, after the crops have been gathered, and the ground is cool in the early morning and carries a scent, are we invited to sally forth to hunt the denizen of the stream. After the dissipations of a season in town, a course of otter-hunting is more beneficial to the human economy than a journey to the distant nauseating waters of Abana and Pharpar. To rise at the peep of day, and inhale the cool, invigorating morning air, when every blade and leaf is sparkling with dew, is delightful

and health giving. Of course, this is but one side of the picture, for you may not be so felicitous in your choice of a morning ; but we shall consider you only a feather-bed sportsman if you grumble at being asked to stand up to your middle in water, with a fresh nor'-easter blowing down-stream. Those who would decry the sport tell us that otter-hunters come to the end of their tether at forty, or become decrepit and prematurely old from rheumatism and all the ills attending damp and exposure to cold. But, amongst many others, the veteran Mr. E. C. Burton, so well known in the north, an ardent otter-hunter, who travels half across England to join in a day's sport, is a living example to the contrary, for when hounds run he can live with the best of us ; he has, too, played the game all round, and in his day steered two Grand National winners to victory.

The thorough-going otter-hunter has a kit suited to the surroundings of the sport—big boots, well cut and slashed to let the water out as quickly as it gets in, stockings, and breeches, and, above all, flannel, and plenty of it. Ladies, too, turn out in goodly numbers, and by their healthy and fair looks give a charm to the sport that it could not possess without them. They adopt short skirts, dispensing with petticoats in favour of knickerbockers ; thus rationally and sensibly clad, they are ready to spring into the water or stinging nettles without taking harm.

'Come, dine, sleep, and hunt next morn with the Bucks Otter-hounds in Leicestershire. Bring your old clothes.' So ran a telegraphic invitation, which was very welcome to the receiver, who, alas ! after a hard season's hunting, had nothing but old wearing apparel, so that the last sentence was quite superfluous. In due course we were located in the best of quarters in the little hunting town in the Midlands, where quite a body of otter fraternity from all parts of England were assembled for a fortnight during the stay of the Bucks Otter-hounds to hunt the waters of the district. The hunt-button was prominent at the dinner-table, being also worn as a charming little brooch by half a dozen ladies, ardent members of the hunt, whose four-foot staves bore many a nick registering an otter killed. Trophies and talk all converged otterwards, and had you been there under the influence of those bright eyes, and heard the thrilling stories of many a stirring hunt after the wily otter, you must have declared in favour of the sport as second to none ! Yes, to hunt him, with your legs comfortably under your

host's mahogany, is sport indeed ! and we toasted him with old port, and wished we might be there to see him fairly tailed on the morrow. We fêted that otter as never a 'sly goose-footed prowler' has been before, and nothing would satisfy but that we should all join in joyous chorus a song in praise of the Bucks otter-hunter.

Now, of all English sport,
I've always been taught,
There's nothing like hunting the otter;
And in summer it's true,
There's naught to pursue,
Save the varmint that's known as the otter.

Chorus—So, here's to the beast called the otter,
He's wily and canny the otter.
No sport is more thrilling,
No beast takes more killing,
Than the varmint that's known as the otter.

So rise with the morn,
Take whip, pole, and horn,
For we hunt him quite early the otter.
The dew's on the grass,
'*C'est bon pour la chasse,*'
He's a devil for scent is the otter.

Chorus—So here's to the beast called the otter, &c.,

That evening our plans were laid for the morrow, and we had placed ourselves absolutely and entirely in the hands of beautiful Lady Jane, our host's eldest daughter, who undertook to initiate us into the mysteries of the sport, and make us fond of it ever after. What blissful dreams followed. We saw otters as beautiful as mermaids, disporting themselves in deep, still, reedy pools, and sun-lit glades. On the waters was a ring of bubbles like pearls—Lady Jane, by-the-by, wore a string of pearls around her beautiful white throat—this was the otter's chain, and as we struck out boldly to catch the otter, we got tangled up, and it was a case of 'we don't know where we are,' until a lovely mermaid took us by the hand and kindly hung us up on a may bush to dry.

II.

The reflections of the morning, however, are quite another story. We awoke with a start in the early grey dawn with a sensation that the house was being broken into, as our host, an

ardent follower of the chase beat a tattoo on the door. We had a throat like the back of a grate, and felt more inclined to lie abed and consider otter-hunting an over-rated sport. No! the man that tells me he likes getting up at peep of day, when the poultry-yard are just starting their hailing of the smiling morn, we have no hesitation in pronouncing a humbug of the first water. But there was no help for it; all our vows and promises of the evening before had to be carried out, or our reputation of being entitled to any pretensions in the world of sport were gone for ever. Of course, the wind had shifted a point or two during the night, and was blowing decidedly fresh from an easterly point, which is always conducive to a blue nose and endless pocket-handkerchief work. At breakfast the ladies, as they generally are, were decidedly in the best face and spirits, and maintained a ripple of conversation. The male portion take longer to wake up, and were uncommunicative and not very keen in facing their breakfast, excepting our host, who was an otter-hunter bred and born, and always put a red letter in his life's calendar against these early-morning reunions. Lady Jane looked bewitching in tweed jacket and skirt, with pink flannel blouse, and in her hat wore an otter's pad mounted with silver. Under the sunshine of a bright pair of eyes, we gradually began to open and expand, as a daisy does when the sun's rays look that way. By the end of breakfast we had made up our minds to go through with the day's sport, but to keep on the bank in preference to wading the shallows as long as possible. Gay, buccaneering songs over-night, about tailing otter, diving into the flowing stream, and running all sorts of risks, are all very well, figuratively speaking, but we are not all amphibious by nature, and you have others to think of besides yourself. Yes! Lady Jane, in her otter-kit, was more lovely than when in her best gown, even when lit up by the shaded lights of the dinner-table.

On the platform of the little station, to catch the eight o'clock train, we formed a good-sized party—a motley group of blue-coated, red-capped otter-men, and short-skirted ladies, all armed with four-foot staves, and branded with the gold hunt-button. Our travelling companions were a gang of navvies, with their pipes and whiskets, going forth to their day's toil a station or two up the line. The hounds were giving tongue in their van, mounted on a truck to be attached at the rear of the train, and two rough terriers in the axle-box kept up an

incessant yapping. When the train did steam into the station, others of the otter-hunting fraternity put their heads out of the windows and shouted friendly greetings, and soon we were steaming ahead to the place of meeting on the borders of Leicestershire, carried along by the best covert hack in England. Lady Jane, with some forethought, had provided us all with little packets of ginger-nuts, as being the most sustaining and easy to pocket, and we had not forgotten a 'drop of the cratur' in our flasks.

The meet was by the station, where a goodly number of farmers, with their daughters, and a couple of parsons were in waiting to swell our numbers. The Hunt Staff present were the Master of the Hounds, Mr. W. Uthwaite, and his athletic young brother, Mr. Gerard, who acted the part of huntsman to perfection, with Morgan, the whipper-in, a short, well-knit youth, not at all unlike an otter himself. The morning was bright, but bitterly cold, with a strong east wind blowing; but there was every promise of the ground carrying a rare scent. Directly hounds were enlarged they threw their tongues most freely, and showed the briskness and activity that promises well for the prospect of sport. When you hear the joyous music of otter-hounds, it at once kindles the sacred fires of the chase, and, like the hunter who instinctively cocks his head and tail, and snatches at his bridle, you feel equally determined to be with them. Lady Jane was quickly fraternising with the hounds, whose personalities and performances were all known to her. The strength of the pack was ten couple, a fine, wiry-haired lot, with grey, shaggy eyebrows and moustaches, reminding one of old general officers. 'Stormer, boy! Here, Stormer!' said her Ladyship, as the old hound wagged his stern in acknowledgment and put his shaggy head to be patted. 'Stormer's thirteen years old, and has never told a lie in his life, and he can set them all right on a bad-scenting day. Brandy's another favourite of mine, a second-season dog, and just the stamp of what an otter-hound should be. Those two foxhounds are Welsh, and wonderfully good line-hunters, feathering beautifully, though running perfectly mute. Look at the two white, wire-haired terriers! You can hardly hear yourself speak for their incessant yapping, and they are a hard-bitten pair. You see, one has had his lower jaw mauled by an otter, and has only just got over it. He went to an otter in a drain, where it was impossible to dig, and tackled his game without flinching; but the water rose

and choked him off, and directly he let go the otter mauled him.'

Directly hounds were sent to water they dashed into the river Wreake, and on the far-side bank settled down to run at a great pace, scent serving them well. Inspired by the music of the pack and Mr. Gerard Uthwaite's horn, we found our legs, and ran as we have never run before, through tall, rank grass, as wet as a brook and cold as a stone. The ladies took their places in the hunt, and proved themselves stayers; in fact, we were glad of an excuse to check at the fences, get our puff, and lend a helping hand to beauty. The scene was an inspiring one, the dark-blue uniforms and red caps of the hunt staff close up with the hounds making a striking bit of colour on the water's edge, fringed with many-tinted reeds and rushes. The river Wreake is both wide and deep, varying from nine to thirteen feet in depth, difficult water in which to bring an otter to hand. All the way up the river-side we tracked an otter's spur in the soft mud, conjuring up visions of a five-and-twenty pounder. The claws were very sharp and perfect, showing that he had frequented streams with muddy beds, for where the bottoms are stony and gravelly the otter's claws get worn and rubbed down to mere stumps. After going about two miles up-stream, the Master became convinced that hounds were running heel, so turned back by road to Brooksby Station, and hit off the trail again on the far side. From the spur in the mud it was evident a brace of otters had been hunting the stream during the night, turning aside into the reedy swamps in the meadows to look for frogs and eel-spawn. For a mile and a half down-stream hounds ran very fast, casting themselves like lightning, and throwing their tongues all the way. It was hard work to keep them in view, and by this time the followers of the hunt showed a very long tail, but whilst Lady Jane, with her four-foot ottering staff, kept with the pack, we felt an untiring zeal and energy for the chase. Describing a half circle in a big grass field below Hoby Mill, the pack ran right up to an old willow-tree on the river's bank, and came up with their otter. Here hounds challenged the holt, and from their clamour proclaimed that he had couched there very recently. Away went the Master to the miller at Hoby to get him to let down the river a foot or so at the dam, and the rest of the keen otter-men took their places at once on the river banks to man the stream, standing trusty sentinels at intervals for the distance



They must have him!

of a mile, to view the otter's chain. As the poet Somerville so graphically described the chase—

‘At length his couch he leaves and dives along !
The ascending bubbles mark his gloomy way.
See, there he vents !’

‘Here he is ! here he is !’ shouted an enthusiastic young man ; ‘the blobs keep coming up.’

But the more practised eye of Lady Jane, who was close by leaning on her pole and scanning the surface of the water, checked the novice. ‘No, no ; they are eel bubbles ; don’t halloa !’

The wind, being rather choppy, caught the surface of the water, breaking the bubbles, so that it was impossible to see the chain regularly.

The water was sinking every minute by inches, making it possible to hunt our otter with some certainty of bringing him to hand. Hounds were working very true up and down the reach, a hard-bitten lot, who never seemed to tire or stop from cramp and cold. As Mr. Gerard’s keen eye detected any sign of his otter he cheered them on, and they came together with a crash of music that put everybody on the tip-toe of excitement.

‘We shall have to jump into the water directly,’ said Lady Jane ; ‘it will never do to let this otter give us the slip after hunting him so well all the morning, and the river is going down so nicely that it will be easy enough to get a firm foothold !’

The keen, athletic young huntsman, Mr. Gerald Uthwaite, who is indued with all the instincts of an otter, seemed to be of the same opinion, for into the middle of the stream he waded right up to his elbows, feeling his way along with the trusty pole. Hounds were clamouring for blood as they winded their otter, and he must have dived off the bank right under them to avoid the terriers.

‘Look out there ! Don’t let him get back to the deep water down by the mill dam !’ shouted the huntsman in mid-stream, with his hounds swimming all round him.

‘Come on !’ said Lady Jane, running down-stream. ‘It is shallower here, and we can make a line across.’ And, tucking up her skirts, she was the next minute wading into the water, inspiring half a dozen more to follow her lead. Ugh !

what a beastly feeling it is, as the cold water slowly creeps up, and then, rising higher and higher, embraces one's nether man in its cold, clammy grasp! The deeper you get, the more you feel its power to lift you off your feet. Lady Jane did not appear to mind it, and was all aglow with excitement, catching hold of our hand—materially strengthening and supporting us in a perilous position. 'Keep your eye on the water and your feet together, for the otter is just as likely as not to dive between your legs and upset you.'

The bank was lined by a crowd of people anxious to see the sport, but not to take to the water. As the pack swam up to us, old Stormer throwing his tongue and Uthwaite cheering, the moment was a thrilling one, and the water was lashed into a fury by the plunging hounds. 'Look out; don't move! they must have him! hold together!' And instinctively we clutched tighter the hand of Lady Jane, and drank in the divine afflatus of otter-hunting.

What a splash and general *melée* of struggling hounds there was all round us! and then 'Who-whoop!' rang out as Mr. Gerard Uthwaite tailed his otter.

We remember no more, as the waters closed over us, being knocked off our legs by the worrying pack, and well-nigh buried in the soft mud of the stream. It was the beautiful mermaid of the dream, in the shape of Lady Jane, who kept tight hold of our hand, and pulled us back from the land of oblivion and forgetfulness.

An hour later, when wrapped in hot blankets, and well primed with hot whiskey cordial, we learnt all about it, and had the satisfaction of being presented with an otter's pad for the bold part we had taken in its capture. We may now be numbered amongst the keenest votaries of the sport, having fairly received our baptism—nay, rather, total immersion. The otter's chain has entwined itself into our affections in more ways than one, so look for an announcement at no very distant date in the interesting column of forthcoming events!

POOL-ROOM BETTING IN AMERICA.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

POOI-ROOM betting was essentially an United States institution, and just now when the knell is sounded, possibly for its eternal burial, considerable public attention is attracted to its many peculiarities and the curious characters who ran the system, as well as the typical dupes who supported it.

It is difficult to trace the origin of the idea, but it is generally supposed that it was evolved from the 'policy-shop' system of gambling, a type which is very popular in the United States among the coloured people, and which consists of betting that certain numbers or combination of certain numbers, will appear in a certain number of slips, each bearing a number, which are drawn one after another from a box, and on the successful guessing of which certain variation of odds is paid. The white citizen who wanted to gamble in a small way, did not like to be seen going into to these nigger haunts, notwithstanding his democracy, and it cost at least 8s. per day to go to the race track, besides occupying half a day, and so, when some bright genius was struck with the idea of opening a room, posting up the odds, and booking bets varying from 1s. up to 200*l.*, it met a decided want in the upper grade of the lower strata, among which must be classed clerks, mechanics, truck-drivers, policemen, and shop youths. The passion for gambling is more or less inherent in the great Anglo-Saxon race, and the restless American has an especially large share of the virus in his composition. From this small beginning grew the enormous system which corralled the entire country, encircling it like a web. Soon the primitive bookmaker disappeared, giving place to a large slate or blackboard, on which were written in bold type the name of the meeting, the distance of the race, the horses, the weight, the rider, and the odds, while the bookmaker remained hidden behind a screen in company with the ticket-writer, the cashier, and the man who manipulated the odds and their variations. As soon as these places progressed sufficiently to use the electric telegraph wires, they sprung up like mushroom all over the country in large towns and cities, driving the 'bucket-shop' (Stock Exchange pool-room) to the wall, and

practically monopolising the gambling fraternity of the country. The jobbery on the Stock Exchange gave that institution a bad name, and many men of respectability who did not care to be seen at the track became enthusiastic patrons of the pool-room. Then the blackboard spread until it circled the large room, and there appeared not one race at a time, but the entire programme of every meeting in progress in the country from Maine to California, on which bets could be made at any time from 11 a.m. to the time of the last race, and from 1s. in the poorer class of room to 1000*l.* in the better class. This growth was speedily taken advantage of by the owner and the backer of horses who had a good thing on hand. Instead of being obliged to wait until betting opened at the track, and being limited to the operation of the twenty or forty bookmakers who might have stands, with only the twenty minutes between races in which to make a book, these pool-rooms enabled the punter, by means of commission agents or friends (with the facilities in the States of transmitting cash by telegraph), to place almost a hundred thousand pounds upon a horse, if desired, at very fair odds, where at the track not a twentieth could have been placed at any odds whatever. This produced an 'advisory code association' by which one pool-room in Chicago or elsewhere notified all the others of the betting being done at that point, and this in turn was met by the punter giving orders that the commission men should act in concert, at the same hour and minute. These brief details will give an idea of the gigantic scope of the pool-room, and what the recent sudden suppression of them meant to a vast army of *employés* and followers.

And now to the word-picture of the room, which can scarcely fail to be of interest to English readers. I will take the famous White Elephant on Broadway, the great street of the city of New York, because it was the most typical, and because, strange to say, with the passing of the pool-room as a legal feature of the city, has passed away even the building known all over the country as the 'Elephant,' in which fortunes have been won and lost, and the site of which is now occupied by a ready-made clothing firm. How have the mighty fallen! Entering this place by any of the six doors fronting on the main street, one was confronted with a bar fitted up in the palatial style which appears to be the special pride and prerogative of Uncle Sam, where brandy cost you 2*s.* 6*d.* the drink, but lager beer in a small glass could be procured for twopence halfpenny. Delight-

Tul and eminently thoughtful democracy! To the left of this room was a modified Stock Exchange 'bucket-shop.' At the side of this there were the famous bowling alleys of the German type, backed by a fine painting in distemper of a winter scene (with a view, perhaps, of keeping the players cool), and along the side of this was the open-sided corridor leading to the pool-room. The immense floor above was occupied exclusively with about fifty pool and billiard-tables, with suitable lounges, &c.

At the entrance to the pool-room stood a tall, powerful fellow bearing the marks of many battles and encounters, his office was ostensibly to answer questions, but in reality it was to make short work of any 'kicker,' *i.e.*, grumbler, or losers who wanted to make a fuss, and his prowess in this matter is a national household word. When in the full tide of its success the room was about 60 feet long, by thirty or thirty two wide, and it was surrounded on three sides by a dais rising four steps, and on these gradations were placed chairs, and the ubiquitous cuspidor or spittoon of the nation. Across the fourth side was the mystic office, with three slits or peep-holes in the heavy wooden fixtures. These were respectively for the bets, the cashing of winning tickets, or the interviewing of the manager with regard to disputes, or the betting of large sums. Two sides of the room had the walls covered with huge blackboards, on which were the details of the races before described, one man being appointed to each track represented, and these men walked up and down a raised platform with a cloth in one hand, a piece of white chalk in the other, and a piece of red chalk behind the ear. At the back of the screen stood a man whose head alone could be seen, who was known as the 'caller,' and whose office it was at times to tell the 'rubbers' what changes to make in the odds on the board, and when the race was run to announce its progress, he being dictated to by the telegraph manager or book-maker, who was also behind the screen. More of this anon, however!

Promptly every morning at 11 a.m. the room was opened, and the early birds dropped in to take a long shot, or to locate themselves for what to them was the business of the day, the very breath of their life. Half-an-hour later appeared the proprietor, known from Maine to California, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, as 'Butch,' the Christian name of Thompson being lost in oblivion. He was a broad-shouldered, powerful, square-jawed, smooth-faced man, spick and span in his dress, which

always impressed one with the idea that the tailor never *could* give him enough cloth to adequately cover the enormous muscles of his arms. He looked a man who, but for his superfluous flesh could have given the great and only John L. Sullivan a good 'hustle' for honours when he was in his prime, but that opinion could only be formed by his appearance, for 'Butch' was *so* lamb-like, and *so* pacific. He had run the gamut of human life, commencing in Norway as a butcher, then a farmer, then a soldier; deserted for striking an officer, and came to Uncle Sam's kindergarten; served with Sheridan ('Little Phil') at the Valley of Virginia, and afterwards in the heroic ride to Winchester, when the army was in retreat, and Sheridan dashed along the road through the demoralised rabble shouting, '*I'm going back, boys!*' turning the retreating forces again to the front to score a magnificent victory due only to the personal magnetism and devil-may-care heroism of one man: then it is said that 'Butch' was close behind him, all his stolidity gone, replaced for the time being by the most marvellous flow of language ever heard to issue from the mouth of any human being. He it was who introduced the wonderful game of 'Chuch-a-luck' which he states 'proved of huge profit to myself and no detriment to the service;' and when the war closed, grading through lecturer, horse-dealer, and heaven only knows what, he took up the pencil, and speedily became known on every track in the country; until seeing the possibilities of the pool-room, he pushed the 'Elephant' to success—as far as he was concerned! Disdaining the bar and its allurements, 'Butch,' with an enormous cigar in his mouth, would meander in an aimless way to the pool-room, and ascending the 'rubbers'' platform, make his opening speech for the day, of which this is a verbatim specimen. 'Butch' speaking in a quick, jerky manner, as he ambled up and down without the slightest vestige of grace or dignity: 'Now, boys, any one who could find faults with the odds posted there, was born several centuries too late, and so lost his chance of giving pointers on the Creation! There's Peruvian! Katz thinks well of him, but I think he will run about third. It was said last night that a "shoo" was to be arranged; but if it was, your uncle would know it, and I say it AIN'T, see! Philadelphia Fred's got a good dog in Appoller, and yer see the mud's deep, and he's a hog for slush! Orlander Jones he played \$50 on Little Fred, thinking I would tumble, but I didn't, and if he want \$5000 at the same price he can hev it. That's the kind of hairpin I found

myself on getting up this morning ! There's that sixth race, fer maidens, with that hoss of Phil Dwyer's in it ; but it ain't no maiden, though its owner is—as fur as sense goes ! That star means his hoss won't start. I put 'em ther. Dwyer enters the hoss, and I scratches him, see ! I know my business, and don't want you fellers to lose your money on a "dead un." Now, boys, to-day is a \$5 limit, and the ticket juggler has orders not to accept less. I've got to pay rent.'

Suddenly turning to the window : 'What's that ? A \$2 sport betting \$100 on the Holman colt. Not on your life ! Who sent you here, sonny ? Tell me, and I'll let you make three times as much, if your game comes off.'

Turning to the audience again, confidentially : 'Those schemers make me dead tired, and will drive me out of the business in my youth, yet.'

And so he rattles along for the hour or so, keeping his audience in good humour, his speech dribbling out like the fire of sharp-shooters, and deemed as necessary to the cosmopolitan sporting world of Broadway, as morning prayers to a well-ordered Presbyterian household. Scores came in to hear him, and for that only, but all made a small bet for appearances' sake, and if they won to-day, 'Butch' got it back again to-morrow. And the audience, as the time for the first race approached, would consist of idlers, club men, representatives of the *demi-mondain* element in the famous 'Tenderloin' police district around the corner, messenger boys, clerks who had stolen away for a minute in their lunch hour, assistants in stores who had made an excuse to get out to put up a dollar on their fancy, or what some one has told them, racing men who want the best odds, or those who want to see what the ring is likely to do in the matter of price, representatives of other pool-rooms to watch the odds, for there is no honour among race-track thieves in the pool-rooms—these all rub elbows with those marvellous types the 'racing fiends,' as they are aptly called, men whose whole life is wrapped up in the pool-room, who get money from God knows where, and bet, and bet—to-day dressing in scarlet and fine linen, a week hence in rags ; who, not more than once in a season can be seen wearing an entirely good outfit, for if the clothes are good, the hat and shoes are past repair ! This is the type that could have been watched during the season, and their struggle for existence noted. First comes the new shiny silk hat, and a week or two later comes the coat—a frock coat—then the white vest, and later the

trousers and shoes ; but by the time the last arrive the hat needs the iron, and the seams on the cheap coat begin to make faces at the sun ! Broken—‘ dead broke ’ to their last cent—they have ever a story to tell the stranger of a purse left at home, a man who has disappointed them, a disputed bet, which has prevented them from backing a certain horse in the next race, which, in the expressive language of the craft is ‘ A copper-rivettèd, shaft-welded, lead-pipe clinch,’—*Anglicè*, ‘ a sure winner,’ on which he will ask to be favoured with one \$5 from the winnings. Day after day, year after year, we, the Nestors of the racing world, see them and recognise them, until they are missed. A casual inquiry—pneumonia. Cause ? ‘ Oh, closing the pool-room drove him to the winter tracks, and the “suckers” (*Anglicè*, the “pigeons”) do not go there, so he made little, and slept in the open too often.’ Such is the new *de profundis*, in place of the old ‘ too much uncertainty about his good times.’

The first race was at 2.30, and by that time the room had for some time been filled with a dense crowd sitting on the chairs, and tightly packed on the floor space, all smoking—from the cigarette of the youth, smelling like a pestilence, to the still worse cheap cigar of the low-class tout, on to the Havana of the bookmaker and swell punter. What an atmosphere ! No ventilation to speak of, no sun ever penetrated the two tiny, dim skylights—bluer and still bluer became the light ; the ‘ rubbers ’ were kept busy at work changing the odds ; red marks were drawn through the scratched horses’ names ; the electric instruments’ behind the screen ‘ tick,’ ‘ tick,’ ‘ tick,’ mingled with the buzz of many subdued tongues. The small bettor, having made his bet, stood with his eyes fixed upon the price quoted on the board against his selection, in an ecstasy of joy if it shortened, cursing if it lengthened, trying unconsciously to hypnotise the animal to victory before even the horses were at the post ! What a picture for a modern Hogarth ! ‘ Butch ’ is now silent—the most unconcerned of men—strolling up and down with his interminable long cigar in his liberally assessed mouth. Men are continually coming and going ; one notices the coming ones, but not the ones who leave, and the impression given is that the very walls are elastic, and stretch to hold the ever-increasing crowd. It is summer, the thermometer on the wall registers 80 to 90, and the majority of the throng want a bath badly, yet such is the fascination, that decent people linger and smoke hard to vary the odour of the unwashed human ! There is a magnetism in the

air! The 'dead-broke sport,' when he sees these figures on the board, sees new worlds to conquer, picks out the horses he fancies for the six races, and runs a 'shoestring' in his mind (a parley), figuring up how much richer he could end the day if he had but that elusive \$10 to begin with, and with these Barmecidal thoughts feels poor no longer! There are grouped the weary 'combination' players, whose scheme is 'a certainty,' but who made 'an error,' or did not get there in time to play a certain race, and so were 'euchred.' Elsewhere are the students of the 'dope sheets,' as the charts of form printed in the papers are called, and the human electricity strains even the impartial spectator's nerves to a fearful tension. The silence grows deeper, anxious faces turn to the clock, 'tang-tang,' goes the instrument behind the screen with a change of timbre, and the head without a body says wearily, 'At the post at Morris Park,' or wherever the meeting may be. At a touch the sea of faces turn to the blackboard; some of them are careless, others calm, others simulate inattention, and others still are tense and drawn, growing more so as the seconds tick away. Again that impassive voice, 'They're off.' How many of the crowd but have heard these magic words burst from the lips of 20,000 or more on Suburban Day, at the race track in earnest, and that human thunder is what the bulk of the crowd *now hear*, not the single voice: 'They're off!' What they *see* is a cluster of noble steeds speeding along the dusty backstretch, with some certain colour, which their favoured horse carries, well to the front, or the rear, according to the way *they think* the horse ought to be ridden. The room has vanished, and some of the hands of the nervous ones move as if they were actually and practically riding the horse themselves. 'Apoller at the half—a head,' sings the rough voice, followed up with 'Peruvian second,' a pause, 'Little Fred well up.' A murmur passes round, 'I told you so,' 'Wait until they reach the stretch,' &c., and again the track rises where the blackboard stood a minute ago. Then with an edgeless voice comes, 'Peruvian in the stretch—two lengths, Apoller second—and—Holman colt third!' The excitement is intense; somewhere in the crowd one can hear a whisper, strained to breaking point, 'Come on, Holman, come on, come o-o-o-on,' and, looking across, a white-faced youth could be seen, hands and legs going, his eyes filled with a vacant stare, carried away, as the vision of the 100 to 1 shot, entering the stretch in good company, gets possession of him, and as the voice again sounds, 'Apoller wins—

a head, Holman second—six lengths, Dixie third,' he faints for a moment and gasps, then comes to and smiles pitifully and weakly. 'You are all right,' says a bystander; 'the little dog got second at 50-1.' 'And I only played him straight,' is the heart-breaking reply; 'I only had the V (\$5).'

This is no fancy sketch! It is life in the pool-room pure and simple; and if you had looked after that race, you would have seen some good-hearted fellow go down into his pocket and give that poor devil \$5 to make up for his loss, and then seen them in close confab as to what the chooser of the 100-1 shot that ran second fancies for the next race. The old hands will tell you it was genuine the first time, and was afterwards worked successfully as a trick, until the room-keepers decided to throw out any such curious cases, and that they then disappeared to a very great extent.

Then the last race is run! The men stream out. Types? An encyclopædia would not hold a tenth part of them. There they go—the smell of tobacco trailing after them for hours, so thoroughly had the air been clogged with it! Broadway is filled with the theatre *matinée* people, the floor of the pool-room is covered with torn tickets representing money paid to the bookmaker and lost; the blackboard is checkered with '1,' '2,' '3,' in coloured chalks, with rings round the figures; the air is dense and stale; the room is empty, save behind the screen, where the bookmaker's clerks are at work, and 'Butch,' as the gains for the day are announced, gives his partner a cigar, and, crossing his legs, says, 'Those ducks get dead easier game every day they fly;' and the partner nods and replies, 'That's so,' as if he had never thought of that pregnant fact before.


Such was the pool-room betting of New York, and at one time there were no less than 275 rooms open in that city alone, and the race-tracks grumbled bitterly at what they believed to be loss of patronage which by right belonged to them. The rich Western Union Telegraph Co. favoured the pool-rooms because of the immense revenue paid by them for electric service. The Ives Pool Bill passed, making it unlawful to gamble, except at the track; but still the rooms flourished, for city laws in New York are like pie-crusts—made to be broken at the discretion of Tammany, the great political organization! In 1892 some of the track organizations boycotted the Western Union, and would not let them have the news of the races; and then came a period of carrier pigeons, 60 feet spying towers, and

on the part of the track-people, guns for the pigeons, and hoardings of pine planks for the spying towers; and then the war ceased! Mr. Richard Croker, the head of Tammany, the ex-pugilist, who has 'killed his man,' and who, ten years ago, swore to not possessing \$10,000, bought a \$250,000 stable, and continued to add to it; and suddenly the police discovered where the pool-rooms violating the Ives law were located, and in twenty-four hours they were closed, and practically have remained closed, not being re-opened this season.

For legitimate racing it is a good thing. They were a blight and a curse to the community in many ways; but it is yet a question as to where the moral tide will end. It was started to boom the attendance at the legitimate tracks in New York, but it did not do so, and the wave has spread across the river to New Jersey, where it has already closed the magnificent Monmouth Park track—possibly the finest in the world—Elizabeth, Clifton, Linden, and Guttenberg, and there are 'wars and rumours of wars' about the curtailment of the season, or the abolishing of betting at the lordly tracks of the Brooklyn Jockey Club, the Coney Island Jockey Club, the New York Jockey Club, and the Brighton Beach Association, all of which now have the privilege for thirty days each season for racing, and all these tracks are located within ten miles of New York City, and compose the American Epsom, Newmarket, Ascot, and Goodwood.

BACKING AN OUTSIDER.

By 'PECKWATER.'

OME years ago I was unable to find a suitable tenant for a large poor farm in the Midlands, so I decided to farm the land myself. The farm-house was a large rambling place, built, no doubt, to accommodate a numerous household in those days when a whole tribe of hired servants were lodged and boarded by the farmer, and, as I was then a bachelor, I invited my cousin 'Jerry' Thornhill to take a share in the establishment. We soon had the inside of the house made comfortable, and a right jovial housewarming, which lasted for nearly a week, celebrated our taking possession of Daisemore Court.

'Jerry,' who really rejoiced in the aristocratic name of 'Marmaduke,' was a most entertaining companion. Sport was his main object in life, and here he could indulge his propensities to the fullest extent. He was a capital man across country, and between the flags had proved himself hard to beat. On our entering upon the farm, Jerry at once started a lot of brood mares. He strongly maintained that our thoroughbreds, if selected of the right form and with stout blood in their veins, would beat the best half-breds at any game; and, I must say, results in a few years' time proved him to be correct. I can point to horses he bred, which neither weight nor distance could get to the bottom of, and at the time I refer to, he had, among others, a grand five-year-old horse by a son of old Collingwood, dam by Teddington, fit to carry a prince.

This young horse promised to make a hunter of the highest class, and I was disgusted beyond measure when Jerry told me he had agreed with a neighbouring trainer to have him schooled for steeplechasing.

'I suppose William Preston told you he could win the Grand National with him?' I remarked, imitating the trainer's habitual stammer when he was excited. He frequently had one up to 'National form' in his own heated imagination, or else good enough to enter for the Cambridgeshire after a few weeks' galloping on the flat. By the way, one does not so often hear of those provincial 'pots,' which, twenty years or so ago, were frequently to be met with, when small local trainers were numerous and farmers were rich enough to train a blood one or two at home. A most amusing instance had just been brought to our notice by a neighbour, who really ought to have known better, for he had been the owner of some first-class horses, but, without any trial, either public or private, he had allowed himself to be persuaded that in a four-year-old filly, trained by Preston, he owned an undoubted flyer.

'She's sure to win the Severnham stakes,' a good handicap race at that time, both trainer and owner lost no opportunity of proclaiming. Consequently she was backed by every local sportsman, high or low, in the neighbourhood. 'Jemmy Grimshaw' was specially brought down to ride her, but instead of winning easily, as was confidently expected, she never showed in the race, but walked in ignominiously with the crowd.

Our friend was speechless through disappointment for a time;

at length, when Grimshaw appeared in the paddock, he asked him for an explanation of the mare's running.

'It can't be the mare's right form, Grimshaw!' he exclaimed.

'But the mare ran very well, sir, very well indeed. She's slow, sir, yes, devilish slow!' Jemmy replied, with that humorous twinkle of the eye some of us, perhaps, remember. The fortunate owner did not wait to hear more, and in a few minutes the 'flyer' was brought under the auctioneer's hammer, and was purchased by a sporting butcher for a ten-pound note.

'Runs very well! but devilish slow' just hits the mark when home-trained ones are asked to perform in public; but Jerry Thornhill's five-year-old Messenger was of a better class. He was entered for the Severnham Hurdle Race at the ensuing autumn meeting there, and the locals, who were in the know, declared he must win, entirely ignoring the fact that, well as he was handicapped, he had to meet some of the best hurdle-racers of the day, one of which in particular, Mr. Chilton's Blueskin, could give him any amount of weight, and simply lose him. However, it was useless to refer to public form with persons so infatuated, so I listened to the daily reports of the horse's doings and said nothing.

At this day the Severnham Autumn Meeting was a fixture which drew together sportsmen from all parts of the country, and, as the time drew close, even Jerry Thornhill seemed to lose his head, and could talk about little else but his horse's prospects. He had at one time decided to ride the horse himself, but his trainer persuaded him to put a professional jockey up. 'Over a big country I would not ask for a better man, but over hurdles, as you are out of practice, it is quite different,' the trainer urged, and so far his employer seemed to agree with him.

'I shall just run into Severnham this afternoon, and see who has arrived,' Jerry said at breakfast on the day before the races.

'Shall you indeed? we shall have racket enough all the rest of the week, and remember we have visitors arriving to-day and a lot of men are coming to dine; but, if you must go in, drive my bailiff in with you, as he has business in the town,' I suggested.

To this Jerry at once agreed, and before I started out for the day I told my man to be sure and bring Mr. Thornhill home by seven o'clock at the latest, for I knew, if Master Jerry got among some of his old pals again, I should see nothing more of him until the meeting was over. He had been perfectly steady for more than a year, and as the visitors I expected included

two of my own sisters, to one of whom Jerry was to be married the next year, I was especially anxious that now there should be no relapse into the eccentric ways we had both succeeded in shunning for so long.

I had returned from my day's hunting, and had dressed early for dinner, when I heard our dog-cart drive into the stable yard; then, as I was coming downstairs, candle in hand, Mr. Jerry entered the hall. After lighting his candle, I saw him, to my great surprise, begin to carefully bolt and lock the front door. I then came close to him. 'Halloa! you're not gone to roost, then!' he exclaimed.

'And you were locking up for the night, and had forgotten all about the dinner party! why you must have been mixing your liquors, and no mistake,' I replied, hardly able to speak for laughter.

'I say, this is serious, but are *they* come?' he managed to inquire.

'No! I found a telegram from my brother-in-law, that they would join us on the stand to-morrow, and come on here after the races,' I replied.

'That's all right! but what had I better do?' he gasped.

'Here! let me get you upstairs, then have a hot bath, and let your man bring you a cup of strong black coffee. Then tumble into bed for half an hour or so, and, if you feel up to dressing again after your snooze, you will be able to enjoy your dinner, and all will go right.'

Jerry took my advice, and before dinner was announced I was glad to see him appear among our guests, as if nothing had upset him.

He always had a wonderful way of pulling himself together, and as during dinner he kept his tongue quiet, and drank very little, by the time the old-fashioned mahogany beamed upon us he had quite recovered his equilibrium.

One of our guests, Fred Hopton by name, my cousin could never get on with. Hopton was one of that class of men who are always on the look-out for any stray fiver or pony that might be picked up. His method was perfectly legitimate, although some of his acquaintances, and Jerry Thornhill was one of them, declared that he was little better than a sharper. Hopton's turn soon came for trying on his industry; the races at Severnham were naturally the chief topic we talked about, and, after the merits of the horses engaged in the grand annual

steeplechases had been discussed, the handicap hurdle race claimed our attention.

'Your five-year-old is well in at eleven stone,' Hopton remarked. 'Shall you back him?' he asked Jerry.

'I don't bet now,' was the reply.

'If you ride him yourself, I should like to lay 8 to 1 against him,' the industrious one added, with an implied sneer at Jerry's horsemanship, which had the effect the speaker aimed at.

'Then I will ride him myself, and take your eight ponies against him,' Jerry replied with warmth.

'Now I really must beg of you to put off any further speculation till you are in the betting ring,' I interposed with, as I saw that my cousin was losing his head and his self-control.

'One does not often pick up a pony so easily as this,' Hopton remarked audibly to his next neighbour, and with this the matter dropped; and shortly afterwards we moved to our smoking den, and Jerry, to my great relief, went straight off to bed.

Next morning, as I was going round the farm before breakfast, I met Jerry on his hack, returning from Preston's training quarters.

'You are out early! been to see the crack take his morning canter, I suppose?'

'Yes. Preston is very mad about my decision to ride the horse myself. What a fool I was to pay any heed to that beast Hopton's sneers. I shall have to declare at least four pounds over weight, and I shall spoil whatever chance of winning the horse might have had.'

'My dear fellow, you need not distress yourself; if the best jockey in England was up on your horse, he would have no earthly chance against Blueskin,' I replied.

'Well, no doubt this is so. I shall, at all events, have a gallop for my money; the horse is very fit, and I'll make the pace hot for them, see if I don't!'

We were within four miles of Severnham, so Messenger walked straight from his own stable on to the racecourse. On the stand I met our friends, and I could see at once that Master Jerry was catching it hot from my sister Dora. I heard her say, 'The very idea of your riding against professionals! You will only make an awful exhibition of yourself. If it was in a hunt race, I should not mind.'

'Well, if I win, I'll promise not to do it again,' Jerry replied, with an attempt at being cheerful.

'Win, indeed! why, you'll be beaten off half a mile at least! I wish I had not come to see your performance.'

Then Jerry tried to make his peace. 'Whether I win or not, you shall have the best hunter money can buy for your birthday gift,' he promised, and this peace-offering seemed to have the desired effect, for Jerry retired with a smiling countenance, and, as he took his preliminary canter, the pretty Dora even was forced to allow that Messenger was a perfect beauty, and his rider—well, was not such a duffer, after all.

Only four numbers were hoisted, and every one put it down as a certainty for Mr. Chilton's Blueskin—6 to 4 and 2 to 1 on him the ring asked for; then, in some mysterious way, Messenger advanced from 'any price' to 4 to 1 taken freely.

'Surely Jerry can't have sent in a commission to back his horse!' I thought; then I asked his price myself. 'I'll lay 3 to 1; the horse is backed all round,' the book-maker replied.

In the race, Jerry sent his horse away with a long lead. He fenced superbly—too well, indeed—and, when half the distance was covered, Messenger was leading by a dozen lengths. Blueskin was second, the other pair being tailed off and out of it altogether. Before the hurdles in the flat were reached, Messenger began to come back, and Blueskin, full of running, overhauled him at every stride. As they neared the timber a scrimmage seemed to take place. Blueskin, who was slightly ahead, bolted, or was pulled, right across Messenger, causing the latter to jump the wing hurdles outside the flag, as was plain to be seen by every one, while Blueskin himself, after taking the flight crossways, bolted some distance out of the track, and, before he could be righted, Messenger had cantered in first by a long distance, Blueskin being the only one of the others to pass the post.

'An objection of course!' was in every one's mouth; but, to the surprise of all, no sign was made by the Blueskin division. Hopton, in a most excited frame of mind, elbowed his way to where Mr. Chilton was standing. 'You will object to Messenger, of course!' he said.

'I really saw no ground for objection. My jockey has made no complaint, and Mr. Thornhill's horse seemed to win all straight and fair,' was the bland reply.

Poor Hopton was speechless for a few moments; then, as he turned away, he exclaimed, 'What an infernal robbery! they, of course, have all backed Messenger, and pulled their own horse!'



Blackburn, who was slightly ahead, bolted, or was pulled, right across the runner.

Mr. Chilton turned his stony, impenetrable gaze on the injured sportsman. 'The gentleman has evidently lost his money!' was all he remarked to a friend standing near. And so the matter ended.

Miss Dora lost no time in exacting the fulfilment of her lover's promise. 'I am to have the best hunter money can buy, and I claim Messenger as my very own. I am sure he will carry me brilliantly,' she said joyfully. To this Jerry was only too happy to assent; and, as we toasted the winner in bumpers of 'the sparkling,' all but poor Hopton agreed that, under certain conditions, it was not a bad game to back an outsider.

'YOUR NAME AND COLLEGE, SIR?'

By GUY GRAVENHIL.



SOUTH-WEST wind was howling round chimney-stack and gabled roof, while the rain descended in sheets, as Tom Robins, one of the most popular undergraduates of his day, stepped out of the porter's lodge of St. Jude's into the blinding storm. The first stroke of ten boomed out from innumerable clocks as the undergraduate, ducking his head to the blast, rushed up 'the Corn' as hard as his legs could carry him. Just as he turned the corner into the 'the High,' at Carfax, he ran full tilt into a woman, and knocked her clean off her feet into the muddy street. Politeness to womankind of every degree came as naturally as breathing to Tom Robins, and, as he raised the prostrate figure into an upright position, he proceeded to apologise as fluently as his scanty breath would allow, and to express a hope that his *vis-à-vis* was not hurt. 'Not a bit, sir, thank you; but'—and a half-frightened expression came into her eyes, as she looked over his shoulder down the street—'look out! the Proctor is coming! It doesn't do for young gentlemen——.' But Tom did not wait for any more. Realising the situation in a second, he was off like a shot, with the bulldogs in hot pursuit. It was not the first time that he had led the myrmidons of collegiate law a merry dance, and so far had had the best of the game. The present occasion proved no exception to the rule; nor was it at all to the discredit of

the Proctor's assistants that, after half a dozen turns down back streets, the fastest miler in the University should have run clean out of sight.

Out of sight, yes! but not out of mind! No, the recollections of previous breathless and bootless chases in pursuit of that same tall, well-knit figure were too fresh in the bulldogs' memories to be easily forgotten, and they felt absolutely certain as to whose name the porter would mention, when they inquired at St. Ambrose's who it was that had just entered the college gates. Animated by the same idea, and without a word to one another, the two worthies started off in hot haste straight to St. Ambrose's, and asked the porter if any one had just come in, and, if so, what his name was.

'Mr. Robins,' was the prompt reply; upon which his pursuers exchanged glances of unmixed satisfaction and undisguised admiration for their mutual sagacity. The fox was safely marked to ground, and nothing remained to be done but to report the fact to the Proctor that night, and unearth the quarry in the morning.

Meanwhile Tom was chuckling behind his sported oak over his fortunate escape, and was congratulating himself on having taken the best means of extricating himself from a false position. Poor Tom! 'Senior Proctor wishes to see you, sir, at ten o'clock to-morrow morning,' were the words which fell like a thunderclap on his ears when his scout brought in his breakfast next morning. A dead silence ensued, while the scout stood grinning at his master's evident consternation. At last the latter pulled himself together, and said—

'To-morrow, Henry? There must be some mistake. Are you sure it isn't to-day?'

'No, sir, quite certain it's to-morrow. Matthews'—the bulldog—'met me in the Lodge, and said, "Senior Proctor's compliments to Mr. Robins, and he would like to see him pertikler at ten o'clock to-morrow morning." Something seemed to amuse Matthews, sir. He laughed, and looked pleasant-like, when he told me.'

'That will do, thank you, Henry. You can go now,' exclaimed Robins, scowling at the grinning and departing scout. 'Confound these fellows!' he muttered to himself, 'they seem to think a poor devil's rustication, and the consequent ruin of all his prospects, an excellent joke. Well, it can't be helped,' he added, as he set to work with an unimpaired appetite at his kidneys.

and bacon; 'and, anyhow, it is considerate of the Proggins to give me a day for saying good-bye to my friends.'

In pursuance of this idea, when he had finished his breakfast our undergraduate lit a cigar, and sallied forth to communicate his misfortune to his friends and acquaintance, and bid them farewell. He walked down the High, and strolled into Vincent's as the likeliest place to find a squad of his intimates; nor was he disappointed, for about a dozen men of his kidney were idling, lounging about, reading the papers, smoking, talking nonsense, and otherwise making the most of the advantages offered by a University career.

Tom told his tale to sympathising ears, though one man did mutter under his breath, 'Served him right for being such a fool as to go straight back to college,' and was promptly sat upon by the majority, while condolences were lavished on the popular sufferer. By degrees, however, a more hopeful feeling prevailed. After all, sentence of banishment had not yet been passed, and the ever intangible 'something' might turn up in the course of the next four-and-twenty hours; meanwhile, Englishman-like, it was determined to celebrate the event by a dinner that night at the 'Crozier,' which all present should attend.

As seven o'clock struck twelve hungry undergraduates sat down to imbibe dubious champagne indeed, but to eat about as good a plain, old-fashioned dinner as any man could desire. As the bottle went round with ever-increasing rapidity the fun waxed fast and furious; everybody talked at once, and the result was a very Babel of discordant sounds and sentences. Suddenly a loud exclamation of 'Hallo! what's this?' fell from the lips of John Sill—the author of the unorthodox proposition as to Robins' folly in returning straight to college—and drew every one's attention to the speaker. He held up a large clock-key, which he had apparently just that minute discovered in his trousers' pocket, for general inspection, with an expression of ludicrous perplexity on his flushed features. The key was duly passed round from hand to hand, and numerous conjectures were hazarded to account for its being discovered in its temporary owner's pocket. However, as no solution of the mystery was forthcoming, the subject was finally dropped, while the clock-key accidentally remained in Tom Robins' possession. At last, when the time had arrived for coffee and cigars, at which period Sill's face had assumed that preternaturally solemn

and owl-like expression, which often succeeds indiscreet potations, the head-waiter entered the room, and said that Mrs. Simmons, the landlady, wished to know if Mr. Sill knew anything about the key of the bar-room clock.

'Keysh?' hiccoughed the too-jovial Sill. 'What keysh? Clocksh-keysh? No, I don't know anything about any clocksh-keysh. Don't keepsh a watch-shops.'

Significant glances were exchanged between the soberer members of the company, and some of them, who were capable of remembering it, were on the point of mentioning the incident of the key, which had attracted their attention earlier in the evening, when Robins stopped them, and said—

'One moment, please. May I ask Robert a few questions? And, so as not to interrupt your conversation, I will go outside with him, if you will allow me. I have got an idea,' he whispered to the man who sat next to him. 'Keep the thing going in here, and, for heaven's sake, try and make them forget all about the key.'

After this he went out into the passage with Robert, the head-waiter, and asked him what Mrs. Simmons meant about the clock-key. Robert informed him that the landlady thought that some of the gentlemen who had been in the bar overnight must have taken away the key either accidentally or for fun, as she could not find it in the morning, and, as the clock had stopped, she naturally wanted the key to wind it up. He added that she could only remember for certain that Mr. Sill was one of the number who had been in the bar, and so she had asked him, on the chance of his proving the culprit.

Drowning men catch at straws, and it flashed through Robins' ready brain that here was a possible chance of extricating himself from his very unenviable position, so he dismissed Robert with a gratuity, and made his way downstairs into Mrs. Simmons' sanctum. There he found that good lady sitting in her favourite chair in the snug bar-room, knitting as usual, and surrounded by a knot of idlers talking and smoking.

'Good evening, Missis,' he said, good humouredly. 'Why' (looking at the clock), 'you don't mean to say it's a quarter past ten!'

'No, it isn't, Mr. Robins. But my clock stopped last night just after the gentlemen had all gone, and when I went to look for the key to wind it up it couldn't be found anywhere. I suppose some of the gentlemen must have taken it.'

'Is that anything like it?' exclaimed Robins, laughing and triumphantly producing the key from his pocket.

'Why, bless me, it is the very thing!' exclaimed Mrs. Simmons, delightedly, as she took the key from his hand. 'Ah, it's too bad of you, Mr. Robins! I couldn't remember who was in or who was out last night, but, now I come to think of it, I fancy I did see you, and, of course, you were here or you couldn't have taken my key. I'll pay you out for it some day, see if I don't. But now I must wind up the clock,' the landlady added, proceeding to raise her comfortable person from the recesses of her armchair.

'Let me do it for you, Missis,' Robins exclaimed promptly; and she sank down again with a sigh of relief, and promised forgiveness for the theft of the precious key.

Next morning, at ten o'clock to the minute, Tom Robins presented himself at the Proctor's rooms, and was confronted by that worthy, looking remarkably solemn and stern.

'I am very sorry, Mr. Robins, to have to charge you with a very grave offence against the laws of the University. I need hardly specify the nature of your misconduct, and you will, of course, not attempt to deny it.'

'Pardon me, sir,' the other broke in; 'but I am quite at a loss to understand what you refer to.'

It was the Proctor's turn to look astonished, and if ever amazement was depicted on the face of a human being it was on that of the upholder of academical authority. Was it possible, he thought, that any one should have the hardihood to deny an accusation which could be proved immediately by two credible witnesses, so he remarked, frigidly,—

'So you mean to tell me that you were guilty on the night before last of no recognised offence against the laws of the University.'

'Quite so,' Robins replied, firmly.

'Then I must call my servants, who will depose to having seen you in conversation with a disreputable character, to having traced you back to your college, and to having got your name from the porter, who let you in only a few minutes before they arrived. You still deny it?'

'Certainly, sir.'

The Proctor summoned his bulldogs, who came in, so the accused could have sworn, with a malicious grin on their faces. On being questioned by the Proctor they corroborated his state-

ment emphatically, upon which the Master turned to the undergraduate, and said,—

'You hear what these men say. Do you still deny the charge?'

'Certainly I do, sir,' said Robins, as firmly as ever; 'and what is more, I can prove it.'

A smile of contemptuous pity might have been observed on the bulldogs' faces.

'Well, Mr. Robins,' said the Proctor, coldly, 'as you persist in your denial, I shall first call the porter to prove that you entered the College gates at ten minutes past ten, as my servants have stated. Tell the porter to come in, Matthews,' he added, turning to that worthy.

A few minutes elapsed, and the only sound in the room was the steady ticking of the clock, while the accuser pretended to busy himself with his papers, and the accused stood chewing a toothpick with well-affected indifference, till the porter, accompanied by Matthews, made his appearance.

'Oh, good morning, Johnson,' the Proctor said, pleasantly. 'Will you tell me at what hour you let Mr. Robins into college?'

'At about ten minutes past ten, sir, as near as I can recollect; anyhow, I know it struck the quarter almost directly afterwards.'

'May I ask Johnson a few questions, sir?' Robins asked quietly; and, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, said, 'Are you quite sure it was me whom you let in at that time?'

'Quite sure, sir,' Johnson answered firmly, while the bulldogs exchanged triumphant glances.

It amused them to see the hopeless flounderings of this securely-hooked fish.

'Now, Johnson,' said Robins, sternly, 'I wish to impress upon you that this is no trifling matter. Will you *swear* that it was me?'

Johnson scratched his head, looked perplexed, hesitated, and said, 'Well, sir, I am pretty sure it was you; but when it comes to swearing, why, that's a different thing.'

Robins' manner had impressed him, and, now that a possible doubt had been instilled into his mind, all the scowling of the bulldogs failed to remove it. The undergraduate felt he had scored one, and proceeded to follow up his advantage.

'Then you are not prepared to swear that I came in at ten ten?'

'I am almost sure, sir, ——'

'That isn't the question. Will you swear it?'

'Well, no, sir, I won't; and that's flat.'

And from this position no power on earth could move him. The expression of triumph had faded from the faces of the bulldogs. However, their features lighted up again when the Proctor remarked, drily,—

'This is mere trifling, Mr. Robins. The porter, it is true, cannot swear that he let you in at that hour, but he has no recollection of letting you in later; moreover, there is the joint testimony of my two servants as to your identity. I believe they feel no doubts on that score.'

'No, sir, indeed we don't,' the two worthies put in eagerly.

'What have you to say to this, Mr. Robins?' the Proctor asked. 'Were you in college at the hour named, or did you come in afterwards?'

'Afterwards,' the other answered slowly, feeling that he was treading on dangerous ground.

How on earth was he to account for this new difficulty? He could not say that he had not left the college that night, nor could he say that he had come in before the gates were closed at nine o'clock. At the same time, having said that he came in after the gates were closed, how was he to account for the porter not having seen him and entered his name on the book? However, he was no fool, and the same ready wit and consummate 'cheek' which has now made him a leading member of the bar, stood him in good stead in his salad days, so, in answer to the Proctor's frigid, 'Well, sir? Pray go on,' he said, coolly, and rather begging the question,—

'Does it not seem quite possible that, as the porter confesses to having been mistaken, your servants may have been equally wrong in their surmise? As to Johnson not having noticed my coming in, that is easily explained. Of course, he put me down for some one else when I actually came in, just as he mistook some other man for me in the first instance. Don't you think so, Johnson?'

The latter, now quite subdued, admitted that it might be possible, and the Proctor looked rather nonplussed.

'And now,' Robins said, feeling as if he was playing a winning game, and determined to clinch the matter; 'if you will allow me to call a witness on my side, I think I can thoroughly establish my innocence to your satisfaction, sir.'

Will you kindly allow Matthews to ask Mrs. Simmons, the landlady of the "Crozier," to come here ?'

Matthews was accordingly dispatched to fetch Mrs. Simmons, and a silence, unbroken, as before, except by the ticking of the clock, reigned in the room, but with this difference, that it was now the accusers' turn to feel uncomfortable, while the accused with difficulty suppressed an inclination to sing a pœan of triumph.

At length the bulldog appeared with Mrs. Simmons, out of breath with the unaccustomed exercise, and not a little flustered at the summons to the dreaded presence.

The Proctor saluted her politely, and requested her to take a seat, while Robins made her his best bow, and immediately opened the ball by asking her, point-blank, if she did not remember his being in the bar of the 'Crozier' two nights ago.

'Of course I remember it!' the landlady answered promptly; 'because you took away the key of my clock.'

'I daresay you remember his being there,' the Proctor rejoined; 'though it seems rather wonderful that you should be so very sure of one face amongst so many. But, my good woman, are you equally sure about the time? At what hour was Mr. Robins in your bar-room?'

The landlady shot him a glance as if to say, 'I'll my-good-woman you,' and replied indignantly, 'Well, sir, I am sure; and, as I told you before, because he took away my key.'

'But how does that make you sure of the time?'

'Why, because Mr. Robins and the other gentlemen all went out together at about a quarter past ten. It could not have been earlier, though it might have been later, because I looked at the clock, and it stood at a quarter past, and when I looked again a little while after it still showed the quarter. It had stopped then, and there it did stop, till Mr. Robins handed me the key the next evening.'

'But will you *swear* that Mr. Robins was in the bar at all?' interrogated the Proctor, trying to take the wind out of his adversary's sails by his own tactics.

'Yes, and what is more, I am ready to swear to it in any court in the kingdom! Can't I believe my own eyes?' exclaimed Mrs. Simmons, emphatically and with considerable heat. Hadn't her word been as good as called in question, and hadn't she been 'my-good-womaned,' to her great indignation.

Swear to it? Of course she would swear to it, or to anything else, it may be safely surmised at that particular moment, so long as it appeared to be distasteful to her natural enemy at all times, and particular aversion at the present moment—the Proctor. It certainly did occur to her the moment she had spoken that it was somewhat strange that a gentleman should be so very anxious to prove that he had been where he had no right to be; still, he did seem anxious to prove it, and he certainly ought to know his own business best. Besides, she had thoroughly persuaded herself that she had seen him there. How on earth did he become possessed of the key if he was not in the bar on that particular occasion. Moreover, she had seen him, she reflected; of course she had seen him; she remembered it perfectly now.

'I hope that is sufficient and conclusive, sir,' hazarded Robins, as the landlady concluded.

'Certainly, Mr. Robins,' the Proctor replied politely. 'Allow me to express my regret that you should have been brought before me with such a grave accusation against your character, and to congratulate you on having so thoroughly exculpated yourself. And,' turning to the now-crestfallen Matthews and his assistant, 'let this be a warning to you in the future to be quite sure of your facts in a case of this kind. Don't let it occur again. You may go now,' and the unfortunate bulldogs left the room with their tails between their legs. But, when the door closed behind them, Matthews shook his fist in the direction of his intended prey, and gave vent to a stifled, 'Well, I am blowed! Of all the artful dodgers he's the artfulest. Who'd 'ave believed it, Tom, when we 'ad 'im sure enough, 'e'd 'ave beat us. If ever he gives us another chance—let 'im look out, that's all!'

So Tom Robins' name remained on the books of his college,

'And native cheek, where facts were weak,
Brought him in triumph through.'

ST. HUBERT'S FIELDS.

By 'BRENTINGBY.'

GREAT is Diana?' That's all a mistake
 Some folks called Ephesians managed to make.
 A council was held on Olympia's brow
 By goddesses known to the Hellenes—though now
 They're quite out of fashion. Tall Juno was queen,
 As stately a goddess as ever was seen.
 The question was, what they should do with the 'boys'—
 They bothered the ladies and made so much noise.
 Of gods on Olympus they've more than a few,
 And Juno declared that the worst of the crew
 Was Hubert—'He's always careering around
 On horseback, and then comes his old Spartan hound.
 'Tis pity we can't find a suitable field
 That sport to the youth and his courser would yield.'
 'If, Juno, you'll lend me your chariot and pair,'
 Said Diana, 'I'll take a short trip through the air,
 Till I light on a region where man, horse, and hound
 Their fill of hard riding to compass are bound.'
 The 'pair' were the Peacocks: they winnowed the air,
 And sped through the ether o'er Western lands fair;
 The coachman, the Man in the Moon; and the page,
 The Dog Star—no smarter was known in that age.
 But vainly they soared over water and land;
 She pulled up her team on Columbia's strand,
 Drove back to Olympus, obliged to declare
 She hadn't cast eyes on a hunting-ground where
 So rampant a trio could meet with their fill.
 This being the case, proud Olympia's hill
 Must harbour bold Hubert, his horse, and his hound,
 Till grim Death in due time ran the trio to ground.
 What was to be done? Perhaps Hubert would try:
 Go forth on the quest from his home in the sky,
 To seek for a land where his mettlesome horse
 Could gallop galore, while the sheltering gorse
 Held 'Charley'—they'd 'Charleys' in Hellas of yore.
 But cliffs proved to Hubert a marvellous bore—
 The ribbons to him, though, came never amiss,
 He turned to chaste Dian and gave her a kiss,
 Then mounted the car, to the peacocks gave rein:
 They skimmed over Adria, Gallia's fair plain,
 The waves of the Channel soon hove into view,
 Then the home whence the Manners, 'gentle and true,'

In due time would go forth with his courser and horn,
 As a Leicestershire man to the manner born.
 'Ah! this,' said St. Hubert, 'is just the right place
 Where sway shall be held by a hard-riding race.
 Fair Juno's proud bird on their banner shall wave,
 To show who the palm to green Leicestershire gave.
 Their hounds shall be fliers, and as for the row
 They complain of at home, the Belvoir, I'll vow,
 In silence shall run when the opening's o'er,
 Save young ones just entered; I'll promise them more—
 Lawn Hollow through ages shall harbour 'the fur';
 The yeomen of Branstone shall never demur
 To loss of their roosters while hounds are afield—
 Such hounds and such runs as the Belvoir shall yield!

* * * * *

There's never been known in the famous old 'shires'—
 Though 'holding' their furzes, 'hard-riding' their squires—
 A country where men of St. Hubert's brave race
 Went forth with more zest to the joys of the chase.
 Not only from England, but over the main,
 The eyes of true sportsmen are turned to the plain
 That lies round the base of the famous old hill—
 The home of the Manners and 'Cheery old Will!'

NOTE.—A captious critic may say the peacock in the Belvoir crest was not derived from this source. Very likely; but then it might have been.

KENNEL REMINISCENCES.

By 'A RALLYWOOD.'

YOU want to know about the Blackamoor; so though I have often refused (for even a hound has whims and fancies), I'll get it over and done with. The Blackamoor was not black, but he was quite the darkest fox ever seen in these parts. You all know that dark foxes have the reputation of showing the best sport, and I believe they deserve it on the whole, though the Heath foxes, which have such a brilliant record, are often exceptionally *red*. This one had beaten us many a time, and the only reason he has not been so much talked about as some others is that he was not tricky. No; he always beat us by sheer wind and speed, and we respected him accordingly. I never was more grieved in my

life than when I brought him to an 'unhandsome' end. He lived in Ling's Gorse, and Will had a hint from headquarters that he must try to show extra good sport for the entertainment of a 'big gun' who was visiting at the castle; so, though the meet was Belvoir, Will trotted off and threw us into Ling's Gorse, with the wind north-east, in order to get clear of the woodlands. There were three foxes in covert, but the two first were allowed to go scot free. Then a view halloa from Jem announced that the Blackamoor was on foot, and the whole pack, without exception, got on his track with very little delay.

Straight between the pack and the back of Waltham-le-Wolds, he took us at no end of a pace over those little fields full of round hillocks where they say the old Romans dug out their foundations. Nasty places they are now, at any rate, and many a horse that could take high fences and wide streams has come to grief stumbling through these 'billycocks,' as Jem calls them. One or two got into trouble on this occasion, but they soon picked themselves up, and we went tearing on over the Buckminster lands right into the Cottesmore country. We had left Coston miles behind, when at last we threw up our heads, as we had done many a time before. He had simply got too far ahead, and we could make nothing of it, though Will did all a huntsman could to help us. An under-keeper was passing, and Will asked him if he had seen the fox.

'I saw *a* fox just before I heard the hounds, but not *your* fox. This one never came from Ling's Gorse, for he was as fresh as a daisy.'

'What colour was he?'

'Almost as black as old Saph here,' replied the keeper, pointing to a cross between a Newfoundland and retriever.

'That's our Blackamoor, as sure as fate!' said Will, and therewith he turned rein and took us back into our own country.

We got another from Stonesby Ashes, and killed him near the Indalls, after which a move was made for Kennels, and nothing particular happened till we were passing Ling's Gorse, when I suddenly got scent of a fox on the strip of grass by the roadside. I opened instinctively, and before anybody could stop us three-fourths of the pack were into covert. We rattled him about for a few minutes, and when he broke I was the foremost hound, so I got a good view of the fox, and, to my dismay, he was no other than staunch old Blackamoor rolling along, fast



stiffening; but what could I do? They ran into him in the next field, but I took no further part in the little run, and there was nothing but sorrow in the kennel and castle for that brave fox as good as chopped, especially when we learnt that the Cottesmore had fallen in with him after we left him, and had given him another rattling good gallop, which accounted for his reaching home in such a sinking condition. Jem says that was the only fox ever killed unhandsomely in the Belvoir country, and as far as I know Jem is right.

‘That was worse than the polecat,’ cries cheeky young Ranter.

Never did a hound of my race and standing suffer so much from a mistake as I have from that everlasting polecat! Many a good hound has owned to a polecat before now, but it is a fierce light that beats about ‘A Rallywood,’ so I suppose I must go on listening to this nonsense to the end of my days; but I may tell you, Master Ranter, that you wouldn’t have been here to taunt your betters to-day had it not been for old Dr. Brewster.

‘How do you make that out?’ growled Ranter.

When your father, Reveller, was paraded in the Duke’s room at The Kennels, he was not a very promising hound as far as appearance went, so he was drafted, and passed into the hands of a Melton butcher who liked to throw the Quorn puppies at walk with the tradesmen and farmers into the shade. The Quorn have made great strides since that time, but Reveller was then far and away a handsomer hound than any of theirs, and he improved as he grew older, till some of the Quorn men residing at Melton began to cast longing eyes on him, but the butcher wouldn’t part. Whether it was faring too sumptuously or from want of exercise, however, Reveller grew fat and fell into a bad state of health. One day he had been after the butcher’s trap to Scalford, and on his return about mid-day he parted company with his master without the latter knowing it. There is a windmill just above Lord Newport’s belonging to Barnes of Eye-Kettleby, and in the yard adjoining Reveller lay down seemingly on the point of death. There was soon a little crowd round him, for all Melton men take an interest in hounds, but nobody took any steps to help the sufferer. A young spark belonging to the legal profession happening to pass by joined the group, and inquired whether he (Reveller) belonged to the pack.

‘No, sir,’ replied one of the bystanders.

'Let the brute die then,' replied the youth, who, by-the-by, soon killed *himself* with drink. Dr. Brewster, however, happened to be passing, and he knew a hound when he saw one, so he turned on the lawyer and said, 'If I had only time to attend you or that hound I know which I should neglect, and it wouldn't be the hound. One of you fetch a vet., and if you are quick I'll give half a crown.'

There was no delay in bringing assistance, and Reveller was restored not only to health, but to the Belvoir Kennels, where he made a fairly good record, and left behind him a scapegrace like you, Ranter.

'I think I am as true as most,' replied Ranter, in a nettled tone; 'and I don't think I'm the slowest in the pack either.'

Perhaps not; but that taste your father acquired at the butcher's has evidently descended to you, or you wouldn't have got that thonging from Jem the last time we drew the Spinney for lagging in covert to eat the sheep's heads and plucks that old Cook had put down for the foxes.

I flatter myself I put master Ranter in his place that time, for the others, fearing I might refuse to entertain them with any more yarns, were all down on Ranter, so I haven't heard another word about the polecat from that quarter.

'Never mind young "Mutton-bag;" we know he had to be sent in for sheep-worrying,' remarked Norman. 'Tell us something about Leicestershire Jack.'

That was Mr. White, of Condoover, one of the 'Old Club-Four,' a wonderful man for judgment. He seemed to know when a fox broke whether he had to keep his steam in reserve or whether he could take liberties before we had gone a quarter of a mile, partly because he knew every inch of the Melton side of our country and could forecast the line, and partly because he was a shrewd judge of how a fox meant to finish by the way he commenced. We generally get an idea pretty soon, but a man on horseback has a view of the fox sooner than we. There was in those days a Mr. Darnley, who came from Yorkshire with some good cattle expressly to pound the famous four, and more especially Leicestershire Jack. Darnley was named Jack, too, so they called him 'Jack the Tyke' to avoid confusion, and the rivalry grew so strong between the two that it ended in a bet on the result of the next three Belvoir runs—two out of three they called it—and the Tyke, having a very strong stable, felt confident of winning.

The first draw was at Freeby Wood, and before we were thrown in there was a good deal of betting on the two Jacks, those who went on the men taking White, those who went on the cattle fancying the Tyke, who rode the best horse in his stable except for water-jumping, which wasn't likely to be required that day, a point which Darnley had taken into consideration. We had hardly begun to work the wood when a fox broke on the north-west side, but of this we knew nothing till afterwards. The second whip viewed him, but didn't give the holloa, and we soon hustled another gentleman out, whereupon Charley (the whip in question) holloaed loud enough, and away we went in the direction of the metropolis. It was nice running over Norman's farm and the other grass grounds down to Wyfordby—nice for hounds, I mean—but the jumps are tremendous for the greater part of the way, and Leicestershire Jack was quite a field behind the Tyke, when, to the latter's dismay, the fox crossed the Eye about midway between Stapleford bridge and Saxby bridge. A few had it, and got over with a ducking, but most of the horsemen were on the wrong bank, when Leicestershire Jack came up with a rush, crying 'Clear the way, gentlemen!'

'There's no bridge, White,' cried Darnley, as he passed.

'I think there is,' shouted White, as he put his mare, which he had been 'nursing' as much as possible, at the place.

'Bravo, Jack!' cried his supporters, as his mare Condoover staggered up the bank.

'Go on, Darnley! What are you waiting for with a mount like that?' yelled the others.

'The Tyke wants some jumping powder!' drily remarked old Brewster.

'You be hanged!' replied Darnley; 'you know my horse is about as fond of water as you are.' And therewith he galloped off to Stapleford bridge, followed by most of the others; but they were nowhere at the finish, so it was 'first blood' to White.

I learnt all this from hearing Jem calling the whip to account for not halloaing to the first fox.

'How do you know there was another fox?' said Charley.

'Several people saw it, and so did you. Now, out with it. Why didn't you want to get on to him?'

'Well, you know there have always lately been two in the covert, or in the Thorns, which is all the same, and Mr. White gave me a tip to see the Dalby fox, not the Heath one. You

see, there's no water one way, and a pretty wide jump the other, which suited him much better than it did the Yorkshireman.'

'Why didn't old Berridge or one of the others holloa then? They were on your side of the covert.'

'They were, but they were also on our side as regards the match.'

The Yorkshireman turned the tables the next Saturday, when they went from Harby Hills over to Holwell Mouth, for, though he got into the brook, he got out again and beat Leicestershire Jack in the gallop down the slope, where the fox ran to ground, so the excitement about the match grew fiercer than ever before the next Wednesday saw us, as usual, at Stonesby.

We had been having splendid sport on that side for weeks and had killed a good many, but there was one in Stonesby Gorse that had beaten us twice about a month before, consequently there was every prospect of the two Jacks having plenty of fun for their money. So they had, for, after crossing the Bruntingby glebe land and trying the sandholes in Adams' Oatleas which were stopped, he took heart of grace, and veering to the right made for Clawson Thorns; but neither of the rivals could stir an inch when they were two or three fields away from the covert. Both horses were dead beat, and there was nothing for it but to finish on foot, which they proceeded to do amid the laughter of the few who were well enough up to enjoy the fun.

In the second field from where they left their horses both threw off their coats, and spurted over the remaining one, to where everybody thought there would be a finish in the shape of a run to ground; but as they neared the boundary fence the unmistakeable sounds of a worry in covert fell on their ears.

'Finish at the fence,' gasped the Tyke, putting in his last ounce.

'Fence be d—d!' spluttered the Condoover man, and there-with he quickened in turn, and jumped not over, but right through the hedge, regardless of the scratches he got either in the jump or afterwards as he tore through the thorns, and sometimes under them, on all fours to the spot where we were busy with what was left of the Stonesby Gorse fox. Of course, White got the 'brush' and won his bet, but the Tyke declared he would bar doing the quadruped business if ever he took a Leicestershire man on again; and that was the only time I ever knew such a finish, though Will, of course, had to finish on foot in the famous Lincolnshire run, but not on all fours.

We have had the best huntsmen and whips in our country that ever were known, excepting a few of the Quorn Masters who hunted their country themselves, and as a hound of discrimination (although I say it myself) I ought to know, but sometimes a promising young whip comes to grief through no fault of his own. George Ashbury had to leave at the end of his first season through the draw at Goadby Gorse. We were thrown in there one Wednesday, and the place seemed thoroughly swarmed with foxes. I have heard since, that twelve brace were afoot at one time, consequently the pack got divided in spite of all the whips could do, and though a few of us minded Will's horn and got on the line of the fox he meant to hunt, there were not more than about seven or eight couples, which is a mere skeleton of a pack to hunt a Goadby fox with. We rattled him pretty well through Eaton lordship, and on to Branstone Lings, where we became as helpless as a pack of sheep-dogs. It was no use making excuses, Will declared he must have men who could get hounds on to the line under all circumstances. 'What is a whip for, I should like to know?' cried Will. 'If there's only one fox we can do without whips except for skirter and lazy beggars that linger in covert, but whoever whips to the Belvoir must reckon on such places as Goadby and Coston. You have got into the wrong country, George, and the best thing for you as well as for us is that you should get out of it as soon as possible.'

'You can't always get hounds to do what you like,' said Ashbury.

'All nonsense,' replied Will; 'I can get them on to line where there's no fox at all.'

This was true, and Ashbury knew it, so he couldn't argue the point further, and next season he went to one of the southern counties, for which I was sorry, because he had a voice—you know what I mean—a voice that a hound could understand. Some of them that I could name have to do all their work with whipcord, and that is neither so comfortable for man, nor horse, nor hound; but George had to go, for Will would never go back from his word, and was as bent on a kill whenever he took the saddle in the morning as any hound in his pack was for tasting blood. Sir James Musgrave used to say that if he were a fox he would sooner be hunted by anybody than Will, but he did show temper at times when we didn't account for our fox after a long run, especially if it was one like the Ling's Gorse one that I told you of.

I also mentioned that Will was not favourably impressed with me in the earlier part of my career, and though I to a great extent obliterated this by my work in the field, he was always very ready to mark any shortcomings on my part. There was the Welby Osier Bed fox, a rasper that Will had chivied now and again through three seasons. The fourth season when we drew the Osier Beds, he went away and led us such a dance up towards the castle, that as we neared the Smite, Redwing and I had drawn ahead of the pack, but I was yards in front of her, when Charley plopped into the brook. Now I have him, thought I, and therewith I took a spring from the bank right into mid-stream, which I thought would put me on excellent terms with my fox on the other bank, but on landing there was no fox and no scent. Redwing came up as I was trying round and all the others directly afterwards, but there was nothing for it, we had to throw our heads up, and Will, who was well up and saw me close on his brush at the brook, was wild at losing him, and laid the blame on me, saying I was a disgrace to my race; but that fox had turned sharp on dropping into the Smite, and crawling under the shelving bank had come out on the same side without crossing. I should know better now. If ever such a thing happens to you youngsters, when you can't get the scent on the further bank within half a minute, try back on the other, a hard run fox is always on the double, and I don't blame him for it.

'How do you know he doubled in the water?' cries Redwing, 'I expect he went on and you lost the scent. If I had been as close up as you I would have accounted for him.'

'Simply because Kellam's farm-boy was watching the run from a tree and saw him do it.'

Jem stood up for me as usual, and said, moreover, that in his opinion it would be a pity for such a fox to have his career cut short as long as he could give us such runs.

'I like good runs as well as any one,' replied Will; 'but I want to kill that fox, and if I don't do it the next time he's at home my name isn't Goodall.'

'Well, if Sampson was as close to him as you say, he'll take some killing,' replied Jem.

That day week we drew there again and got one away, but we didn't know whether it was the same. This time it was Hose and Harby way, and on reaching the latter village pug popped into Jackson's barn, at the door of which we were

scratching and baying when Goodall came up, and seeing Jackson, asked him to open the said door. 'No, no,' said the farmer, 'I'm not a hunting man, but when I took my farm I agreed to preserve foxes, and I don't think it's the likely way to preserve that poor beggar if I let your pack into the barn.'

'But these are the Duke of Rutland's hounds,' remonstrated Will.

'There's no doubt about that,' replied Jackson laughing, 'and no doubt you are his huntsman, but my barn isn't a fox covert. You can draw my cellar and larder to your heart's content, but you won't have that fox to-day.'

Jackson was as good as his word, and only let the Webby fox out when we were far enough away. This fox continued to trouble our pack through most of that season, but we settled him next March when, after a fast fifty minutes, he tried his doubling game through a tunnel beneath a gateway. Whether he would have got away or not I cannot say, but the keepers had set a trap either for rabbits or vermin in the mouth of the tunnel and into this the old boy put his foot, thereby giving us a chance to roll him over, but I never liked the way he died any more than I did the way the Ling's Gorse fox came to his end.

Keen as Will had been after his brush he wasn't pleased with the finish, and remarked that it was a good job Lord Forester wasn't there, as he would have rated the keepers roundly for not taking their traps up when hounds were liable to come into the neighbourhood.

Though I didn't, in spite of all my efforts, retrieve my character by killing the Welby fox, Will was bound to admit that I achieved a remarkable feat when we found a fox in one of those little spinneys on the Freeby Estate. He gave us one of the longest runs, in fact, barring the Coston run and the '57' run, I think the longest I ever experienced. From Freeby to Stoke Rochford is far enough as the crow flies, but the line deviated right and left most of the way, so by the time the run seemed drawing to a close, not only the field but the hounds were dead beat, and though I was not the only one still running, I was the only one with any go left in him, when Goodall came to a standstill and called to Mr. Hind, 'Go on, sir, I can't get a yard further!'

Hind was a Spronton farmer, and it was said that the horse he rode that day was better than any that ever came out of the Belvoir Stables. Be that as it may, he was the last left, and we

were a sorry lot for him to finish the run with, but we toiled along with our tongues hanging out, till, when we came to the bounds of Squire Turner's park I was the only hound fairly up, and if the fox had not been sinking too, I must soon have lost the scent, but Hind kept cheering me on, and at last we struggled into view, but just as I thought he would be mine within the next hundred yards he bravely took the Witham. I didn't think I had strength enough left to cross it, but I suppose the water refreshed me, and after chasing him over three-quarters of the next field I killed my fox in view of Mr. Hind, who reported the affair to Will; but that brush never went to Belvoir, for a man who was out shooting secured it, and waved it in defiance at the Spronton farmer, who could no more cross the Witham than he could fly.

That is the only time I have killed a fox without help except a chopped one now and then, and I expect it was good for me that he was dead beat, or I should probably have some scars to show as mementoes of the finish.

Joe Hardy was out that day, but he couldn't get through, though I believe he would have tried the river if he had got so far with anything left in his horse. He wouldn't have cleared it at that point, however, as he did the Eye when he made his famous bridge. A stranger who didn't like the look of the river asked him the distance to the bridge, so Joe jumped it and turning in his saddle—

‘Haw! Haw!’ cries he, ‘come on my boys,
You'll find I'm no deceiver,
That's all the bridge that's worth a d——,
When riding with the Belvoir.’

Jem says that's the finest bit of poetry he ever read. I don't pretend to know, but I took the trouble to learn it because I consider Jem a first-rate judge in everything. Be that as it may, I can tell you very few men ever went straighter or faster through a morning run than Hardy. I have heard Jem say he never had anything but a screw in his stable, and hunting he declared never cost him a penny, because he was so fortunate in picking up purchasers for his horses. Mr. Grant bought a good many from him and so did Westerdale. We have eaten a good many of his in these very kennels, but he got the best of Hardy in one bargain, on which Westerdale remarked, ‘I've had many a roasting from you, Joe, now you've got a boiling from me,’ and sure enough within a week the horse *was* boiled, but they

WENDEL

Doubled!



say that was the only time Hardy had the worst of a bargain in horseflesh.

How Allen of Waltham and he used to ride one against the other! They used to pump their horses out to that extent that they couldn't get home sometimes when there was a wide finish, but they never admitted it; on the contrary, they both used to declare they had turned up with their mounts as fresh as horses could be after a run. Once they both found themselves in a Lincolnshire village after a run from Thorpe Ashes, and each, unknown to the other, had to seek a night's entertainment 'for man and beast' at the hostelrys, one at the 'Granby' the other at the 'Nag's Head.' The landlord of the latter having noticed Allen riding into the 'Granby' yard a short time before Hardy's arrival, thought to ingratiate himself with his hunting guest and do a stroke of business at the same time by bringing the brother Nimrods together. With this intention he strolled over to the 'Granby,' and finding Allen in the 'parlour,' asked him what sort of a run they had enjoyed. This led to a chat, in the course of which the landlord of the 'Nag's Head' remarked,—

'Oh, by-the-by, there's a hunting gentleman over at my house, but he seems lonely; you see my customers can't talk much about hunting.'

'Oh, indeed?' replied Allen; 'I'll step across and see whether he's inclined for an hour's chat.'

Therewith he went, and the pair were mutually astonished at being brought face to face in such an unexpected manner, for they had each sought as out of the world a place as they could pitch upon, but they made the best of it, spent the evening socially, and never talked of 'fresh as paint' again after they had about ridden their horses' tails off.

THE SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE.

*By the Author of *Racing for Gold*, &c.*



BOILED once more. One of the greatest certainties I ever had, and yet I could not take advantage of it.'

The speaker, Cecil Trench, had been a page-in-waiting, and, as the custom was at the time, he received on his retirement from attendance at Court a commission in the Guards. Soon after he attained his majority he

took to the Turf, as his father and grandfather had done before him. His success at racing fluctuated from year to year, but it never had been his luck to land any great *coup*, and, much to his vexation, he had not been able to pull off any big event. The previous year to that in which this narrative opens had been an unusually bad one, and a short sojourn at Monte Carlo had not improved matters. But the long lane had apparently come to an end, as his horses were now frequently returned winners, and as he betted heavily when he thought he had a chance every one imagined he was making a mint of money. But, strange to say, this was not the case, as will be shown.

He had accepted with two horses for the Cesarewitch, and both were nicely handicapped, and, as he was very desirous of getting a reliable nag to try them with, he slipped Magnet for the Newmarket October Handicap, which race the horse won in a canter. He was just leaving the enclosure after the 'all right' had been pronounced when he encountered his old friend and racing mentor Admiral Boscawen, mounted on his stout cob.

'Well, Trench, I need not ask you whether you have had a good race,' was the Admiral's greeting.

'To tell you the truth, Admiral, I have not; I am but a trifling winner.'

'How is that? The horse won easily enough, and if you have a better in either of your pair for the Cesarewitch you are devilish fortunate, and ought to about win that race.'

'I quite agree with you, but a fatality attends all my good things. You may recollect my speaking to you on the subject at Goodwood, when I won the Corinthian Plate. Some person must know the secrets of my stable as well as I do myself. If I had any doubts about it before the October Handicap I have none now. To-day my commissioner was forestalled in the most marked manner, and instead of my five hundred realising over three thousand pounds, which it should have done, it only averaged three to one, and brought me in a paltry fifteen hundred.'

'So that game is still being played with your stable.'

'There never has been a stronger case than to-day's. The moment the numbers went up all the long prices were snapped up in a moment, and my agent tells me that some of the winner's backers had the impudence to hedge their bets with him at less than half the price they had taken.'

'It is intolerable,' said the Admiral, with an oath, 'and must

be put a stop to. In your place, I would be inclined to do something desperate. Sir Joseph did not hesitate to put the men who interfered with his commissions in the hole, and you must do the same. Who are the men who forestall you? Surely you know them.'

'Oh, yes, perfectly; they are two Jews, who say they have their instructions, and will not reveal who fathers their bets, and I cannot compel them.'

'It is a pity the Jockey Club has not got the power to cross-examine them; if they had they would soon make short work of such d——d scoundrels and their employers. Are you sure of your trainer?'

'You know him, Admiral; and I think he is a most trust worthy man.'

'I have never heard anything against him, but there is a screw loose somewhere. Does any one but the trainer and yourself know the weights of your trials?'

'Only the head lad, and we have always found his suggestions most valuable. The trainer has every confidence in him.'

'Most objectionable; how did you come to trust him, Trench?'

'That is easily explained. The trainer was laid up for several weeks, and in his master's absence the man managed things so well that we have hidden nothing from him since.'

'All that I can say is, it is a great mistake, and the sooner you stop it the better. It seems a certainty that you are being grossly deceived, either by your trainer or his head lad, and the latter is more than likely the culprit. In all conspiracies—trials we will say, as Machiavelli does in his *Prince*—the fewer people concerned in them the better; and in the putting together of your Cesarewitch horses I should get rid of that head lad, but in a way he would not think about,' and the Admiral whispered something into the ear of the Captain. 'If anything leaks out after that your duty is clear—take away your horses at once, and I will see that your trainer will have a difficulty in getting another employer. By the way, have you no idea who the man in the background is who is so well posted up about your stable?'

'I can only suspect that it is that scoundrel, Samuel Evans.'

'What! the fellow you caught cheating at baccarat?'

'The same.'

'Not at all improbable; but let me think,' remarked the Admiral, meditatively, 'did you not run away with his wife, or his sister, or something of that sort?'

'Not so bad as that, Admiral,' answered Trench, with a laugh; 'I took Dora Grey, of the *Phoenix*, away from him for a time; but when I separated from her, on being engaged to Lady Mary Stanbury, I believe he had her back.'

'Good taste on his part,' grunted the Admiral; 'but what can you expect from such blackguards. He, no doubt, wanted to have the spending of the money you settled on her. Fellows of that stamp will descend to anything. If I remember rightly, there was some *fracas* at the theatre between you.'

'Yes, there was; he insulted me, and I knocked him down.'

'Served him right. It seems very likely that he is the prime mover in the forestalling. Both he and the lady are, you may rest assured, your most deadly enemies; but do as I tell you, and you will, I hope, be able to upset their plans.' With that admonition the Admiral trotted off to see the finish of the next race.

On the journey from Newmarket to London the Captain arranged in his mind how to deal with the rapidly approaching Cesarewitch. He was greatly in want of a large sum of money, for two all-important reasons. His intended wife had no money of her own at present, although, at the death of certain relatives, she might inherit a good deal of property. It was necessary, then, that he should provide amply for the new household, the keeping up of which would fall entirely upon him. In a grave monetary difficulty a year or two back his younger sister, who was also about to be married, lent him a few thousands of her portion, which would now have to be returned. If it had not been for this forestalling business he would have had by this time plenty of money to meet both cases, for it is a serious matter when a commissioner goes into the Ring and is obliged to put up with half the price he ought to obtain. Over two or three races ten thousand pounds is soon lost in this way, and good things do not crop up every day. The Cesarewitch meant, therefore, a great deal to the Captain.

Next morning found him closeted with a celebrated private detective.

'Can you undertake to give me the whole of your time for the next ten days,' asked the Captain.

The detective looked at his books, and consulted a man in

another room, after which he answered in the affirmative, on which Trench entered into full particulars of what he required.

‘I perfectly understand what services you wish me to undertake, and if you leave the matter entirely in my hands you will be well satisfied,’ said the detective. ‘For such a liberal paymaster I will, if it be possible, discover the traitor, and if I should not succeed nobody else need try.’

‘Then you will go down to Berkshire to-day?’ queried the Captain, whose training establishment was situated in that county.

‘By the 2.15 train,’ replied the detective, looking at his *A B C Guide*.

The same day Trench wrote to his trainer that he would be down on the Wednesday to try the horses the following morning, and that he was to endeavour to secure certain jockeys. Each morning he received a note, sent to another name and address, from the detective; but up till the time the Captain left for Berkshire, on the following Wednesday, there was nothing of the slightest importance to report. No movement of either trainer or head lad was at all suspicious, and no strangers had been seen near the training establishment, nor at the village inn two miles off. To show his employer that he was thoroughly on the alert, he enclosed two photographs he had secretly taken with his Kodak of the trainer and the head lad.

The trainer and Captain Trench discussed, in the presence of the head lad as usual, the weights for the next morning’s trial, and it was at length agreed that the imposts should be as follows:—Franchise, 4 yrs., 8 st.; Magnet, 4 yrs., 7 st. 8 lb.; Ruby, 6 yrs., 7 st.; Dolly, 3 yrs., 6 st. 12 lb.

The two Cesarewitch horses were Franchise and Dolly, and these were their respective weights in the handicap. Magnet carried the same impost with which he won the October Handicap, and Ruby, who was a fast miler, was merely started to make the running. The October Handicap is run over 1 mile 2 furlongs and 28 yards, and the Cesarewitch course is exactly one mile longer. It was decided to let Ruby make the pace warm for the first mile, and that at that point Magnet should jump in and do his best for the remaining mile and two furlongs. This plan ought, according to the opinions of the three men present, to tell them what chance they possessed of securing the biggest handicap of the year.

The jockeys were weighed out, and, after the necessary leads

had been put in the different saddles, doors were locked, and every one retired to rest, except Captain Trench and his trainer, who were chatting over a glass of grog at the parlour fire.

‘It is very galling to be perpetually forestalled in this way,’ remarked the Captain. ‘I suppose, if we have a chance in the big race, the same game will be repeated.’

‘I most sincerely trust not. I cannot understand it at all; it is dreadfully puzzling. I would give a good deal to know how the rascals get their information,’ replied the trainer.

‘It is of the greatest importance to me, and I am losing a large amount of money through our information leaking out.’

‘I am quite aware of that, and it grieves me to the heart. But what can I do more? For some time, ever since you told me what was going on, I have been extra careful and very watchful.’

‘You think the head lad is not to blame?’

‘He has given me no cause for the slightest suspicion. He neither writes letters nor receives any, and he is never seen speaking to the touts or a stranger. The only person who comes to see him is his sister—the only relative he has alive, and she is with a dressmaker in London.’

‘Be that as it may, I have a fancy for readjusting those weights, and keeping the secret to our two selves.’

‘Nothing easier, Captain,’ said the trainer, jumping hastily from his seat and lighting his lantern. ‘Have you decided what the new weights are to be?’

‘Yes, there they are; I have written them down.’

‘All right. Come with me as quietly as possible, and if there is any treachery on the part of Angus [the head lad] we will soon put an end to it.’

The weights were altered, and the trial duly took place. Franchise was first, a length in front of Magnet, while Dolly was only beaten a head for second place. Ruby was not, of course, persevered with after the mile. The head lad was delighted, and informed the Captain privately that he would be sure to win on that eventful Tuesday. The trainer and Trench knew better. Dolly, who only ran a good third in the trial, was actually the winner at the weights, and, accidents apart, she seemed bound to win that year’s Cesarewitch, which she eventually did in the most gallant fashion, and the Captain netted thirty thousand over her success.

To prove that he was attending to duty, there was a photo-

graph of the finish of the trial awaiting him from the detective on his return to the metropolis. The trial, it is needless to say, was duly chronicled in the sporting journals, and Franchise was at once made a great favourite. On the Thursday, the day this news appeared, the head lad's sister, the seamstress, appeared at the training place and spent a few hours with her brother. For some reason or other, he thought he knew the face perhaps, the detective secretly brought his faithful Kodak to bear on the quietly dressed young woman, and duly sent her portrait to his employer. In reply he received the following laconic note from the Captain:—

'You have sent me the information I wanted, and can return to town.'

Franchise was on the morning of the race first favourite, but when his owner declared to win with Dolly, who had been backed quietly at outside prices, the getting out was terrific, and many of the layers against Dolly, including the notorious Samuel Evans, were never afterwards seen in an English ring.

'Well, Trench,' said Admiral Boscowen, warmly grasping him by the hand, immediately after the decision of the race; 'have you done well this time?'

'I should think I have, Admiral, thanks to you.'

'Don't give me all the praise, Captain. That infernal but useful instrument—a Kodak, don't you call it?—discovered that your head lad's sister was none other than your discarded sweetheart, Dora Grey!'

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



XCEEDINGLY thrilling are the incidents and sporting adventures related by Wm. Chas. Baldwin, F.R.G.S. in his work entitled, *African Hunting and Adventure from Natal to the Zambesi*. Many are the hairbreadth escapes which the author has experienced in the pursuit of big game 'o'er Flood and Field,' and the graphic manner in which he relates his experiences with alligators, hippopotami, lions, bears, elephants, and the ferocious rhinoceros, is at the same time amusing and profoundly interesting; add to this, hunting baboons, hyenas, zebras, ostriches, killing snakes, wild beasts and birds, and the sporting repast will be

found sufficing. A vivid description of the various countries in which the aforesaid quarries are to be found make up a book that will be a delight to the sportsman ; copious and artistic illustrations add a claim to this bright volume. Richard Bentley & Sons are the publishers.

‘ *The Golfer’s Dream*,’ by Capt. R. M. Alexander, is a coloured print which contains a considerable element of the ludicrous, as do most dreams. Weird and gigantic stands the awesome figure of Bogey, with his attendant Caddy Sprite, to the evident dismay of a player and utter discomfiture of his caddy, the latter of whom is making all haste to retire from the scene ! The incidents and accidents of the game are forcibly rendered by the artist, himself no mean performer with driver, cleek, and putter. Messrs. Fores are the publishers.




THE WELLESLEY ARABIAN.
After J. L. Agasse.

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

THE WELLESLEY ARABIAN.

By 'PECKWATER.'

'Those grand old days.'

AST women and slow horses settled me, if you really want to know! a stone broke sportsman is reported to have said in reply to sympathising inquiries. Terse and epigrammatic, certainly! but if we are to judge from the remarks one comes across in the sporting literature of the period, the later introduction and indiscriminate use of Arabian or Persian stallions into England had a similar tendency, apart from any seductive influence of the fast and frail ones. There were exceptions, however, for in 1806 the Royal Stud contained two so-styled Arabians—the grey and the chestnut Wellesley Arabs, the former of which was fairly successful when put to English mares, while the chestnut is described by 'Old Forester,' in the *Sporting Magazine*, as the finest horse of the breed he had seen. It is with the Wellesley grey we have to deal, and, in tracing his descendants, we come across a line which will be most interesting and suggestive to many who look back with fondness and regret to the grand old days of steeplechasing, when men bred and ran horses for the love of the sport, and when a good horse was held in higher estimation than as a mere money-spinner. Take for instance the first grand steeplechase at Aylesbury, won by 'Vivian,' with Captain Beecher as his pilot, with nearly a score of starters, and we read that a fifty-pound cup was added to the sweepstakes. Fancy! men who make racing a business being asked to keep horses for such stakes, nowadays! 'It wouldn't pay,' you would

hear at once; and to make steeplechasing 'pay,' there are men who would nobble horse, jockey, and owner, as a mere matter of business, too.

The old rat-tailed Vivian! we love to read of his performances; but how much greater is our delight when we listen to the narrative of a hale old sportsman, who was an eye-witness of many of the events we enthusiastically dwell upon in print.

Our dear old friend was born in that year which gave birth to such celebrities as Tennyson, Gladstone, Darwin, and Lincoln. "Vivian" I remember well,' he tells us, 'and I rode him more than once when Beecher brought him into Staffordshire—rather a narrow horse, set on springs, as it were, and with an enormous stride.' Verily, giants arose in those days, physical, as well as intellectual, and with powers of absorption and digestion which, if universal in this generation, would prove the ruin and despair of half the doctors in the country. No doubt, the wonderful success which followed the use of such foreigners as the Godolphin and Darley Arabs, induced people to import all sorts of worthless animals, without regard to their pedigree or genuineness of descent.

The grey Wellesley Arab, however, brought from India by Mr. Wellesley, brother to the Marquis, in 1803, was mated successfully with Maria by Highflyer, the produce being Fair Ellen, who was dam of Lilius, winner of the Oaks and g.g. dam of Safeguard by Defence, whose progeny we wish to call especial attention to.

Lilius displayed her stoutness and wear-and-tear qualities by winning a race two days before she won the Oaks. Few modern trainers would take such a liberty with their crack three-year-olds, and if they did, their delicate charges would not be slow to resent it. Several other winners of small stakes may be credited to the Wellesley grey, who, by the way, is declared to be a Gulf or Persian Arab of unknown descent.

The chestnut horse imported by Mr. Wellesley is said to have covered in Herefordshire when nearly worn out, and to have been used in the stud of Lord Powis with considerable success as sire of half-bred stock. Next, as regards Safeguard, the g.g. grandson of the Wellesley grey, we remember him also standing in Herefordshire when he was the property of that fine old sporting yeoman, Mr. Wm. Vevers, of Dormington. We were all very fond of this horse, and with 'Stonehenge' (Dr. J. H. Walsh, who practised in the adjoining county of Worcester at that

time) he was an especial favourite. In *British Rural Sports*, when writing on Stallions suitable for getting Hunters and Steeplechasers, he says: 'Safeguard will be, I think, found to be of great service in the breeding stud if his daughters are put to really well-bred horses; unfortunately, his blindness has always prevented his employment with valuable mares, coupled also with the prejudice against modern Arabian blood; but his soundness in every other respect, and the exceptional nature of his blindness, together with his success as a sire considering the inferior mares put to him, will have induced his new owners to carry the experiment further.'

Yes! Safeguard's great merits were lamentably overlooked; but how often does this happen! We cannot help introducing here a notable example of 'pearls before swine' in cart-horse breeding, which we have not cared to record before.

At an Agricultural Show in the West Midlands, of which the writer was then Secretary, two cart stallions which had been serving in the county, but without much attention from the horse-breeding farmers, were entered, *not for Competition*, their noble owner thinking it would not be fair to compete with local exhibitors.

After the classes had been judged, the writer took the senior judge to look at these two horses—he was one of the largest dealers in high-class horses in the north-west of England. After looking them over and seeing them move, he remarked: 'Well, if they had entered the ring with the other stallions, I should not have given either of them a prize!'

These two stallions were 'Enterprise of Cannock' and 'Harold,' then four years old, but now the premier Shire stallion of England, whose stock carry everything before them, and whose value now it is difficult to estimate.

After this digression, we will return to Dormington. Here Safeguard had the usual class of mares sent to him which fall to the lot of a country stallion; many good hunters were bred from him, while from his owner's better class mares several notable steeplechasers were got by him. Of these, Vainhope stands out as by far the most remarkable, indeed, the performances of this horse as a four-year-old were really marvellous. But the first horse we remember of Mr. Vevers's, was that with which his own fame as a cross-country rider was mainly associated. 'Little Tommy,' a mere pony, like 'Globule' of later days, proved himself a phenomenon. We have not space

now to trace the successful career of this little wonder and his veteran rider. The records are within our reach, and we hope to reproduce an authentic report of them in a future number of this magazine.

In the first grand annual chase at Worcester, Little Tommy was ridden by Tom Oliver ; he ran fourth, Roderick Random and Alan McDonough winning, with Gaylad and Jem Mason second. Tom Oliver, or 'Black Tom,' as the provincials used to style him, was veritably a popular idol ; to see him return to scale with his crowd of cheering satellites was indeed a triumphal procession. With the ladies, again, in the provinces he was an immense favourite—a fine, handsome, gipsy-looking fellow, with glossy, black hair, and carefully curled whiskers, he carried everything before him. Like many other lady-killers, however, he met his fate at last. Delilah caught him in her toils and soon peace and liberty knew him no more. His connexion with the Dormington stable could not have been of any long duration, for, when Mr. Bradshaw took the management owing to Mr. Vevers's increasing infirmities, Tasker, W. Archer, and Sam Darling, jun., had the retainers, and our hero was heard to consign owner and trainer to Hades together, 'bunged down in one of their Herefordshire cider casks.' Tom was always forcible in his terms and vocabulary, and often figurative as well. But now while we have space, we must direct our attention to the *début* of the very best of Safeguard's get, the four-year-old 'Vainhope.' This took place at Worcester in 1849, when he won, ridden by W. Archer, the late Fred Archer's father.

We asked a contemporary of ours the other day if he remembered this race. 'I shall never forget it!' he said. 'Mr. Vevers dined with my father in Worcester the evening before the race. He described "Vainhope" as one of the best horses he had ever trained, and, although only four years old, he declared that he was sure to win the Grand Chase next day. Being a careful youth, always on the look-out for a good thing, I had saved some twenty sovereigns or so, and, hearing this tip, I left the old 'uns to their port, and slipped down to the "Bell Hotel," determined to put my 20*l.* on "Vainhope." The large room was full, but little betting going on. Mr. "Fog" Rowlands, mounted on a table, was laying the odds, but was full against "Vainhope." Shortly an old friend accosted me. "There's no betting yet," he said ; "come and have a game at Loo in No. 7." This was a game I fancied myself at more than a bit, so I cheer-

fully joined the party of old hands, and sat down to play the "mild" game of eighteen-penny unlimited. We were only to play till 10 o'clock, and towards the close I found I had lost about half my capital. Then came my turn; over 10*l.* was in the pool, and I picked up ace, king, and a small one—all trumps. In my excitement I led the king instead of the ace. Looed, by all that's execrable, I found myself! with a Loo to pay which took all my balance, instead of having recouped myself for my previous losses. We broke up soon after, and of course I could not back "Vainhope," but next day saw him win cleverly, which gave me a shock I have never fairly recovered from—nor, I believe, ever shall!

But what may fairly be considered the grandest performances of those days is comprised in the account of the Open Steeplechase at Aylesbury in 1849, given by Mr. J. K. Fowler in his admirable sketches of 'Old Country Life,' from which, presuming on old friendship, we venture to make the following extracts:—

'The Aylesbury Open Steeplechase was run over the noted Broughton Country in 1849. Nine started, and the race was won by Vainhope, 4 yrs. old, 9 st. 10 lb., W. Archer; 2nd. British Yeoman (aged), 11 st., Jem Mason; 3rd. Maria Day (aged), 10 st. 5 lb.; 4th. The Young 'Un, 5 yrs., 10 st. 2 lbs.

'Starting in a meadow adjoining the Grand Junction Canal, three large grass fields were crossed to a mill stream, the take-off being on rising ground and an ugly descent on landing; then across the turnpike road, out of which was an awkward double over steep ridge and furrow-grass, into four fields of heavy plough; then a small brook with a stiff eight-feet-high bullfincher uncut, as was every fence that day; then over bullfinchers and doubles to a straight half-mile home, in which a big stake and binder, newly laid, was jumped, with a rising take-off and a deep drop on landing; into a small grass field, out of which they had to jump a tremendous single with a broad ditch on landing, into the winning field. The run-in was about four hundred yards up a steep incline.'

Now, what do you think of this, my bush-hurdle-jumping masters? Only those who have ridden over the Aylesbury country know what amount of doing the course described requires. But, to pile up the agony, note the following:—

'The race took over twenty-two minutes to run, the riders declaring it was over four miles. Mr. J. K. Fowler, who farmed most of the land run over, with Messrs. Hall and Baker, had it measured then and there, and the distance was found to be *five miles and a half!*

‘Again, over the last fence, the leading horses seemed to clear an enormous stretch, and the distance from where their forefeet left the ground to the points where their hindfeet indented the turf was measured, and it was found that a space of thirty-four feet seven inches had been cleared, and this after five and a half miles of one of the severest courses man ever rode over.’

These are facts, supported by unimpeachable testimony, republished two years ago by the gentleman before named. We remember the measurement of one big jump in our Oxford course at Aylesbury, and in clearing this, on a horse named ‘Phoenix,’ the present Colonel Blundell was found to have covered thirty-one feet. Mr. Fowler and his friends generally managed to select a line which would try our mettle, the only thing to be wondered at being how the horses we rode were able to get over such a country without injury to themselves.

And now we must bid farewell to the Wellesley grey. To number such a descendant as our favourite ‘Vainhope’ among his progeny deserves all the credit we can generously award him, knowing as we do that such qualities of speed and stoutness as this horse possessed get scarcer year by year.

A FEW ALTERATIONS.

By ‘FUSBOS.’

‘I remember, I remember,
How my childhood fled by.’

THUS sang a bard of the period many years ago. Same to you, sir, and many of ‘em. So do I remember, not only how my childhood, but how that yet more halcyon period, my salad days (and what days they were, and what would I not give to have ‘em back again!), played precisely the same trick.

At my time of life there is a deal more pleasure I find in the retrospective than prospective, and, it being a cheap form of amusement—no slight consideration in these hard times—I encourage my memory—a more than average retentive one, I flatter myself—to exert itself on every occasion for its owner’s gratification.

A few Alterations! I should rather think there were indeed.

He who knew his way about pretty well thirty years ago, and looks round about him now—well, to say that he feels at times quite bewildered, is hardly strong enough.

I came up to London last May expressly to see Ladas win the Derby. I had my wish, and was pleased to look on at the old enthusiasm at a popular win. But the enthusiasm seems to me almost entirely confined to the racecourse.

Any difficulty about obtaining beds in the West End because it was the Derby Week? Not a bit of it.

When formerly you could not have got so much as a shake-down for love or money, either at an hotel or in lodgings in the fashionable quarter, there is no such difficulty at the present time. Nobody cares a rap for the Derby nowadays.

How different the first I ever saw—Blair Athol's, to wit! I had just left Eton, and was mad to see it, and persuaded the parental governor to take me. Could we get a bed? Not a bit of it. Not a bed to be had for love or money in the St. James's country, or at such few hotels as there were then, and we had to be content with two top bedrooms at a hostelry in Great Portland Street, and glad to get 'em.

And did people talk about Ladas six months or more before the race as they did of Blair Athol and General Peel, Scottish Chief, Ely, and Cambuscan? Why, you *know* they didn't, Messieurs the readers of *Fores's Sporting Notes and Sketches*, and it's my belief they wouldn't have made half the fuss they did about Ladas had he not happened to belong to a Prime Minister, and a popular one.

'I'll tell you the winner of the Derby, and I'll give you all a dinner the night after the race,' said that popular sportsman, the late Mr. Chandos Pole one day, many months before the great race, to a group of his friends, 'but on one condition, mind,' he added, 'and that is that you promise to back him.'

'Done with you!' was the unanimous reply, 'also on one condition.'

'And that is?'

'That you give us the dinner *before* instead of *after*.'

'I'm agreeable,' rejoined the jolly squire, as 'cock-sure' as you please. 'Blair Athol will win, and you'll dine with me at Long's the night before, as you kindly suggest, and be hanged to you.'

I happened to be at Brussels on the Derby Day won by Kingscraft, and, standing in the hall in the Hotel 'Bellevue'

about five o'clock that evening, was witness of the arrival of an English family breaking their journey to somewhere. Fine old English gentleman—looked like a nobleman—very likely was—with wife and daughters all to match.

'And now,' said this dear old gentleman almost as soon as he had set foot in the place, *'I wonder what's won the Derby!'*

I was terribly shy in those days, but, for once, mustered up sufficient pluck to tell him. And it was a treat to see the old gentleman's face light up when I imparted the intelligence that the popular magpie colours had won.

Though there was a big crowd, as usual, at Epsom at the last Derby, the assemblage in the Paddock was certainly nothing like the representative one of former years. Formerly, it seemed to me, I used to meet every friend I possessed there, whereas this time I hardly came across a soul I knew. I had a capital view from the house I was staying in of the company on the road; and there again, what an alteration! A goodish few drags, certainly; but where were the well-turned-out equipages, with their grey horses and smart postboys in blue jackets and white hats, for which Mr. Newman was so celebrated on this particular occasion? I declare I never saw one. The number of hansom cabs, too, on the road, seemed to have wondrously diminished. No, I am afraid the glory of the Derby Day has departed never to return; and for this it is probably indebted to the numerous—too numerous many think—gate-meetings in the immediate neighbourhood of town.

One thing is very certain, which is, that the Derby is no longer the great carnival, looked forward to for months beforehand by high and low, that it formerly was.

Take steeplechasing, too, as carried on in the present day. There are a few alterations here, and no mistake. Where are the good horses of former years, and where are the owners? One good horse stands out by himself in the shape of Cloister; but what an indifferent lot those below him in the handicap are deemed by backers in general is pretty plain from the fact that, as I write this article on the 2nd of February, the horse is being backed at 5 to 1 for the Grand National, carrying the crushing weight of 13 st. 3 lb., and, bar accident, with no Lambs, Colonels, or Disturbances knocking about, what is there to beat him?

So much for horses; now for the owners. With the excep-

tion of the Duke of Hamilton, Lords Rendlesham and Molyneux, what nobleman can you point out taking any interest in the sport? Such names as Lords Coventry, Poulett, and Wolverton, Sir William Throgmorton, General Byrne, Captain Machell, Messrs. Gerard, Leigh, and Studd are conspicuous by their absence, and their places—more's the pity—filled by such kidney as Mr. Moses and Mr. Aaron, the Messrs. Brown, Jones, Robinson, & Co. I say, 'More's the pity,' because their patronage of the sport gave it a sound healthy tone, such as it certainly does not possess at the present time.

Hunting again. What with the farmers all broke to a man, and landlords hard up in consequence, the *nouveaux riches* preferring pheasants to foxes, subscriptions harder than ever to get in owing to the bad times, and the unmentionable barbed wire asserting itself in every direction, fox-hunting—stag-hunting, too, for that matter—has indeed a bad chance. Well might a well-known huntsman express his opinion to the writer a short time since that a very few years hence there would be no hunting at all. 'I only hope it may last *my* time, sir,' he added, pathetically, with a shake of his head, as if he was rather in doubt even upon this point.

There is one alteration, though, in connexion with hunting which is decidedly a move in the right direction, and that is the Point-to-Point Steeplechase, which has lately become so popular, and an established institution with nearly every hunt in the kingdom. It is undoubtedly a change for the better from the usual hunt steeplechase, with its gentlemen riders donning silken jackets, and playing at being jockeys with indifferent success. The Point-to-Point is simply a capital run across country without the hounds; and, with plenty of room, and none of the hustling and bustling at the fences inseparable from a steeplechase over a flagged course, the hunting man is quite in his element and shows at his best accordingly. It is, indeed, an institution which does good all round, besides being a pleasant day's outing for the country side.

The only drawback at all perceptible is, that a horse winning a Point-to-Point is not qualified to run afterward in a race or steeplechase held under Jockey Club or Grand National Hunt Rules.

This, of course, would be rather 'rough' on a sportsman who suddenly discovered that in the winner of his 'Point-to-Point' he possessed a horse good enough to win the Grand National.

with. There might be a little 'Alteration' here, one would think.

But it is in London that the 'Alterations' strike one most. An alien from his native country, returning after an absence, say, of thirty years or so, finding himself turned down at Piccadilly Circus—well, it would certainly be a case of 'e dunno' where 'e are.' And when that alien, having recovered himself a little, takes a look round, I fancy he will be not a little astonished at the alterations which have been effected in his absence.

First of all, he betakes himself to the Criterion to lunch, the magnitude and vast resources of which establishment astonish him not a little, especially if he is old enough to remember the old 'Pic,' which once occupied this very site. Having refreshed his inner man, he strolls down Piccadilly towards the Park. A sportsman, he, of course, stops to have a stare into Messrs. Fores's familiar window. 'Still there, thank goodness!' he exclaims, the only alterations perceptible being the substitution of the works of some modern delineators of sport for the familiar 'Steeplechase Cracks' and 'Blue Riband of the Turf' of the elder Herring which graced the window when last he looked in. Then on to the 'Corner,' which he reaches as the Row is emptying of its occupants. What! the swells of the period 'got up' in light clothes, straw hats, and apricot-coloured boots? And the ladies to match? Can he have made a mistake, and got to Hampstead Heath—'Appy, 'appy 'Ampstead?'

He quite staggers at the thought, and is only brought to his senses by the gruff voice of a policeman, who evidently thinks 'Alien' is not quite so sober as he might be, telling him to 'Move on.' He *does* move on, and sinks into a chair to chew the cud of meditation and smoke a quiet cigar; and, gazing sadly at the retreating figures of the fair equestriennes and their attendant cavaliers, he pictures to himself the Dandies that were to be seen in the Row thirty years ago. Lord Wilton, Captain Henry Coventry, 'Curly' Knox, Reggie Herbert, *cum multis aliis*, all spring up in his memory, and a sigh escapes him as he murmurs, 'They didn't look a bit like this.'

It's a blazing hot afternoon, and the shade of the trees is pleasant. The Alien stays where he is, alternately smoking and dozing, until the riders come back again, still in the straw hats, grey clothes, and apricot-coloured boots. 'Very comfortable, no doubt, but not smart,' is his verdict as he rises from

his penny chair, and prepares to return the way he came to see the coaches come in at Hatchett's. Poor man!

* * * * *

'There is no Hatchett's now,' explains an obliging person of whom he makes inquiries. 'It *was* a cock-and-hen club, but now it's an hotel again—the Avondale—a good one, I believe, but not as it used to be. No everybody, headed by Freddy Hobson, collaring a flat candlestick apiece, and going up to a second-floor back bedroom to look on at a fight between Jack Yonge and a stranger, for instance.'

'Coaches, did you say?'

'Lor' bless yer, they've ceased to start from here for ever so long! The Hotel "Victoria's" the rendezvous now.'

A staggerer this; and the Alien feels positively faint as he feebly makes for the Burlington Arcade, not feeling at all certain in his mind whether he won't find it transformed into an American bowling-alley or a rifle-gallery. But no, the Burlington is still all there, and apparently pretty much as it used to be. The same old smell of patchouli hanging about, and the same lady frequenters, looking into a shop window with one eye and over the shoulder with t'other. And perhaps 'The Alien,' not being so young as he was, is a trifle more fastidious than of yore, for he has the hardihood to declare that the fair (Burlington) Arcadians are nothing like such a good-looking lot as were those of the past.

And what next? A little dinner all by his own self at the 'Blue Posts,' in Cork Street, with perhaps one glass of the famous Punch afterwards, and a chat with Henry. His heart warms at the idea of the superior lamb chop, and the sanded floor, and the chat with Henry. Alas! The old place has been burnt down long ago, and there have been, in consequence, 'a few Alterations;' conspicuous amongst them being the disappearance of the old coffee-room, with its sanded floor, and its pen-and-ink caricatures, and its Henry—Henry 'of the ruddy face, with his anecdotes of the gastronomical feats of that eminent *gourmet*, the late Lord Winchelsea;' and his tips for coming events, usually wrong; and the appearance in their stead of a Teutonic landlord, a Teutonic head-waiter, with subordinates to match, and a seven-and-sixpenny *table d'hôte diner*. Fancy a *table d'hôte diner* at the 'Blue Posts!' Picture to your old-fashioned self the expression on Henry's face if he had been asked for such a thing as the *Ménu*!

'Oh, I'm out of the running! clean out of it!' he cried; 'I want help, or I shall be murdered before the night's out. I'll call at the Albany, and see if my old friend, Jack Rackett, is to the fore. Dear old Jack! he'll put me up to the time o' day if any one will!'

* * * * *

'The Capting left Hell 2 (L 2 he meant) two year ago, to git married, I b'leeve,' was the proud old porter's reply to the Alien's tender inquiries. 'Mister and Missis Slobkins lives in his old rooms now,' he added.

'Mr. and *Mrs.*, did you say?' asked Alien, adding jocularly, 'over the *left*, I suppose, eh?'

'No, there you're wrong, sir,' replied the porter, drawing himself up, whilst his face assumed a shocked expression, which would have done credit to Mr. M'Dougall himself. 'It's over the *right*, I do assure you! We admits married couples into the Halbany now.'

'The devil you does!' muttered 'The Alien,' as he walked off, feeling more *defeated* than ever.

* * * * *

Big Ben was striking eleven, when a dejected-looking gentleman, with a cigar in his mouth, turning out of the Langham Hotel, hailed a hansom.

'Holborn Casino,' he shouted, to cabby.

'Olborn Casiner!' exclaimed jehu; 'Olborn Resterong, yer mean, don'tcher?'

'No, I don't, I said "Casino;" don't you know it?' replied 'The Alien' (for it was none but he), in a somewhat angry tone of voice.

'I *did* know it,' said cabby, 'as well as *you*, or better; but, bless yer 'art, it ain't a caseener *now*, it's a resterong; and they closes at 'leven or 'arf past, I b'lieve.'

'Then go to the Argyll,' said 'Alien,' with the confident air of a man who knew he was right *this* time, thinking how he used in days of old to enjoy listening to the strains of Signor Luigi Curtis' famous band, meeting his friends (a safe find), and perhaps a turn in the 'wind-up' galop with a fleet-footed partner.

'Yer don't surely mean the Dook's?' returned cabby, in a hoarse whisper, through his trap-door, with quite an awestricken look upon his face, as if addressing some one from the outer world. 'Cos, hif yer do,' he went on, 'lemme tell yer at wunce—



"One of the horses pecked"

there *hain't* no Caseener, there *hain't* no Dook's, and there *hain't* no Creemorne. *I honly wish there wos.* And, you'll hex-cuse me, sir,' added cabby, with a pitying look, 'but I should say yer must 'ave bin away from 'ome a precious long time.'

'You're right,' replied his fare, 'and during that time it appears to me that there have been not a few Alterations.'

'THE HONOURABLE TOMMY.'

By FOX RUSSELL.

THE usual chorus of shouts and Babel of confused noises was heard by those upon the Grand Stand and in the Rings at Sandown Park during the progress of the Stewards' Steeplechase. The four competitors had just safely negotiated the pay-gate fence, and were making the best of their way home. Coming round the bend, at the foot of the hill, one of them had palpably had enough of it, and quickly dropped back beaten. The jockey of another was, thus early, riding his horse hard with his hands, and a moment later had been obliged to pick up his whip to keep him in his place. Obviously, only the other two were 'in it' bar accidents, and for a few seconds the issue between them hung in the balance. Then, as one of the horses 'pecked' slightly in landing over the last fence, and lost a length by the blunder, my Lord Bettingham shut up his race-glasses with a snap, and quietly observed, 'The Irishman's won.'

A minute or two later, and the horses, their tails quivering as the sweat ran off their bodies, were slowly ridden back into the Paddock, previous to the unsaddling and weighing-in process being gone through. It is with the rider of the winner alone that we have to do, so we will take this opportunity of introducing him.

Tom Kilbarry—better known in racing circles as the Honourable Tommy—was the eldest son of Viscount Moorfields, a typical Irish landowner, whose estates brought in just about enough to keep him and his family of seven boys and girls in respectability, and that was all—indeed, it was one of his standing jokes that he had 'more fields' and less rent out of them than any one he knew. Nevertheless, a jollier old fellow

never lived, and as long as he had a friend and a bottle to give him, as he put it, he would not despair, in spite of the black outlook for Irish agricultural affairs.

The Honourable Tommy had, for the past five years, been able to bring some considerable amount of grist to the Moorfields' mill by making periodical descents upon the Saxon steeplechasing strongholds with a select little stud of horses which he trained and rode himself. Nowadays there are plenty of big prizes to be picked up by any one who owns a good horse, well schooled and properly handled, and a nice little margin of clear profit, after all expenses are paid, to those who, like Tom Kilbarry, know how to place their animals judiciously. Tom was just now in rare fettle. He had been more than usually lucky with his little string of three animals, and had won five 'chases with them already, in less than a fortnight. So, as he divested himself of his silk jacket, plastered with mud to such an extent that the red part of it could hardly be distinguished from the black, he determined to run up to town by the next train, dine comfortably at the Grand, and go on afterwards to Lady Bolitho's 'At Home.' Not that this form of entertainment was one that at all commended itself to Tommy, as a rule; but Lady Bolitho was a very dear old friend of his father's, and he himself had often received little kindnesses at her hands, for which he was by no means ungrateful. Therefore, having paid a short visit to the racecourse stables, and seen that Cruiskeen, the mare on whom he had just won the 'Stewards,' was none the worse for her exertions, and committed all the three horses to the charge of his faithful henchman, Dan, with full instructions where to go and what to do, Tommy trotted off, very pleased with himself, to the Esher railway station.

Having 'done himself well,' as he phrased it, at the Grand, and washed down an excellent dinner with a bottle of Perrier Joûet '80, the Honourable Tommy retired to the smoking-room in company with an excellent cigar and the evening paper. Sousing himself into one of the easiest of easy chairs, and calling for a cup of black coffee and a modicum of cognac, he settled himself down to enjoy the pleasures of the hour until such time as it was advisable to transport himself to Lady Bolitho's house in Belgrave Square.

As our friend made his way up the crowded staircase, he began to rather wish he had not come, after all. But such

thoughts were only transient, and, pushing on to the landing above, he there found himself confronted by his good-natured hostess herself.

'Very nice of you to come to-night, Tommy. I want a word with you directly I can get away from here,' she said, indicating her post of reception.

Tom Kilbarry passed on into the room, and 'just walked round the course,' as he put it. After ten minutes' survey he came to the conclusion that he didn't know anybody there, and then drifted out of the door again, meeting Lady Bolitho in the act of coming in.

'Oh, here you are, Tommy! Now, I want to introduce you to a really charming girl, Miss Le Pays, a great West Indian heiress. She will be enormously rich—great chance for you, you know, Tommy—and she's the nicest girl I know. Here she is, so come with me'—and so saying, Lady Bolitho towed her young friend across the room, and effected the introduction there and then.

Now, it came to pass that the Honourable Tommy, being perfectly heart-whole, and inclined to matrimony rather in the abstract, found Isabel Le Pays an exceedingly delightful girl; so much so, indeed, that very few minutes had elapsed between the time of his introduction and the commencement of a serious flirtation—that is, if one can call that flirtation which is carried on by one of the parties only, for when Tommy 'tried it on' Miss Le Pays took the wind out of his sails at once. Turning to him she dropped her voice, and said, 'Mr. Kilbarry, I like you, and, although I've only known you half an hour, I'm going to tell you a secret. I'm engaged to be married.'

Thomas felt his chances go out to 100 to 1, with no takers.

'But it isn't chronic?—I mean it—you don't really—now, Miss Le Pays, you're taking advantage of my youth and innocence, and poking fun at me!'

'Indeed, I'm not; and oh! Mr. Kilbarry, I should be so grateful if you'd be my friend, and help me in the matter.'

Appealed to like this, what could a gallant young Irish gentleman do but throw his heart into the service of so charming a task-mistress? Having declared himself entirely at her disposal, Tommy listened to the whole recital of her troubles. It appeared that she was secretly engaged to a young Yorkshire squire, much against the wishes of her guardian. This guardian was a certain General Browne, a half-pay officer residing at

Bath. The old gentleman had an unfortunate mania for titles, and had determined to oppose any marriage his ward might desire to make, unless by it she was to acquire a handle to her name, either at once or in the future. Now, Isabel's lover, Frank Denison, although belonging to an old county family, and a man of considerable wealth himself, had no title, nor any chance of getting one, and therefore did the old monomaniac peremptorily refuse his consent when Denison pressed his suit, especially as, just at that time, Lord Lambkin, a snub-nosed youth with a plentiful supply of freckles and red hair, also proposed, not to the lady—he would not have dared—but to her guardian, for her.

Lord Lambkin was the only son of the Earl of Muttonhead—a very ancient family, whose branches extend all over England, or, as General Browne put it, 'You find Muttonheads, my dear sir, in every place you go to: and usually occupying very high public positions, too!'—a statement which no one could for a moment controvert.

The Honourable Tommy thought the matter over for a few minutes; then an idea struck him. In order to divert the Lambkin attack he would enter the lists himself—of course, acting in strict loyalty to Frank Denison. That was but the beginning of his scheme. He said very little to Miss Le Pays that night, but arranged to meet her in the Park on the morrow.

From that time forward, for some two or three weeks, Tommy assiduously played the part of Isabel's lover; in season and out of season he was always at her side, in so marked a manner that he calculated confidently upon some one bringing the matter of his attentions to the austere guardian's notice—a thing sure to happen, sooner or later. Some 'd——d good-natured friend' is always ready to perform such offices for one, whether one wishes it or not!

At last the object was achieved. They were walking together in the Park, when Tommy beheld, in the distance, Mrs. Fitzfaddleton and her five ill-natured daughters approaching them.

'Now's our chance,' he whispered to his companion, bending low over her as he spoke. 'Look up at me, Miss Le Pays, in as confiding a manner as you possibly can, on the spur of the moment!'

'I shall laugh if I do,' she answered, with a merry look.

‘Well, you don’t seem to find any difficulty in the process when Frank is the target you aim your glances at!’ he said.

‘Oh, how mean you are to say such a thing!’ was the reply, but looking straight into his eyes, as he had requested, at the precise moment when the Fitzfaddleton cohort was passing.

As Kilbarry thought they would be, these manœuvres were entirely successful. Mrs. Fitzfaddleton, being a friend of the General’s, ‘thought it my duty,’ as she put it, to acquaint him by letter with what ‘everybody is talking about,’ and, two days later, Tommy, in response to a somewhat grandiloquent but studiously polite letter from the Bath warrior, prepared to go down and interview him at the city of varied waters.

The night before starting Tommy dined with Frank Denison at the Métropole, and nothing would satisfy the latter but that he should accompany Kilbarry to Bath; so on the following morning the two conspirators comfortably ensconced themselves in a first-class smoking compartment of the ‘Flying Dutchman,’ and were whirled down to their destination.

After a light but *recherché* luncheon at the Pump-room Hotel, it was settled that Frank should ‘keep close’ in the smoking-room of that famous hostelry, whilst Tommy sallied forth to conduct a skirmish with the enemy.

General Browne’s house was situated in a large terrace, some little way out of the town. Sternly suppressing a horrible inclination to giggle, the Honourable Thomas walked up the prim-looking white steps and knocked. The moment the door was opened, three small terriers, each one more hideous than the last, rushed out, barking, yelling, and yapping, in a way calculated to greatly disturb the nerves of most people. Addressing the sedate-looking butler, Tommy asked—or rather, yelled at the top of his voice, in order to make himself heard above the canine din—whether the General was in?

‘Yes, sir; would you please step this way?’

Tom Kilbarry ‘stepped that way,’ accompanied, to his great disgust, by the three terriers, and found himself in a library, or study, of the dingiest description. The dogs had hardly got half through with an impromptu fight, evidently organized with an express view to the visitor’s amusement, when General Browne stalked into the room.

Tom opened fire at once, and in as few words as possible, but with much reference to the ancient title of the Earls of Moorfields, begged to propose for the hand of the General’s ward. The

General, on his part, was very gracious, and after a long and exhaustive—and exhausting—talk, interrupted from time to time by the dogs rushing pell-mell round and round the table, promised his gracious consent to Tom's proposal, and, at the same time, mentioned that of Lord Lambkin. If his ward wished to marry Tom and did not wish to marry Lord Lambkin, then he, the General, would offer no opposition. It was his wish, he confessed, that she should marry a man with a—er—well (the murder was nearly out here)—but let that pass. He would use no compulsion. All this he said in the condescending tone of one who thinks himself rather erring on the side of leniency, in not compelling every one connected with him to marry just whomsoever he, the General, was pleased to indicate. Tommy soon afterwards bowed his thanks and withdrew.

Frank Denison, flattening his nose against the window of the hotel smoking-room, was all impatience to learn the result of the interview. Tommy gave him a full, true, and particular account of what had taken place, after which the precious pair of schemers dined, went to the theatre, and next morning returned to town together, very well satisfied with the success their mission had achieved so far.

The following day Kilbarry had to leave town early, in order to ride at a steeplechase meeting in the Midlands. The heiress, under Tommy's tuition, had developed considerable sporting instincts, and was now positively the owner of two 'chasers, which ran in the assumed name she had registered—'Mr. Bath,' that being the town in which part of her girlhood had been passed. It is hardly needful to say that friend Tommy invariably donned the 'old gold, purple sleeves and cap,' when either of these animals ran in public, and on his advice they had both been sent to the meeting to which he was now travelling, together with one of his own, 'Isabel, late Cruiskeen,' as the entry ran on the card. Miss Le Pays was to be present on this occasion, as she was staying for a few days with friends, not ten miles from the course.

The first race was for maidens at time of starting, three miles over the steeplechase course. Tommy duly weighed out for 'Bold,' Miss Le Pay's four-year-old, and as he rode down the course he just caught sight, for a moment, of the house party containing the proud owner, whose excitement went very near revealing her secret to those around. As it was, the men nodded and winked at each other behind her back, as much as

to say that *they* knew all about her *penchant* for Kilbarry, and that that must be the reason for her getting so excited over the race.

As Tommy turned his horse at the preliminary hurdles, the young 'un gave a great snatch at his bridle, and then went at the obstacle as if he would eat it. He took off two lengths in front and knocked the hurdles flying, giving himself a sharp rap over the shins for his pains.

'You silly fool!' ejaculated his rider, as he landed. 'Rapped your knuckles, have you? Serves you right; teach you not to do it again.' And then he canters him leisurely down to where 'the man with the flag' was waiting to dispatch the horses on their journey.

As the shout of 'They're off!' comes from the stand, Tommy catches the four-year-old by the head, and takes him down to the first fence in front of the rest. He pulls him well back on to his hind legs, and then, by dropping his hands, induces the impetuous young 'un to drop his head into a more comfortable position for seeing the work before him. Steadier now, he cocks his sharp-pointed ears, and sweeps over the first obstacle, with yards to spare on the landing side. Tommy smiles contentedly and pats his horse's neck.

'They may well call you "Bold,"' he says; 'you'd jump a town, and if you'd only drop rushing your fences you'd be a safe conveyance, too. Mustn't expect too much of babies, though.'

And so they go on, the young horse, with all the faults of inexperience, jumping most of his fences far too big, but still holding the lead. Three of the seven starters are down, and one more has refused. Tommy takes in the situation at a glance and judiciously eases his mount, still keeping him in front, however; and jumping big and bold to the end, the good young horse canters up the straight run in an easy winner, with his head in his chest, to the wild delight of his fair owner on the stand.

A few minutes later and Miss Le Pays is in the paddock, watching her horse as he is walked away in triumph. Turning to Tommy, she says,—

'I can't tell you how proud I am of Bold. How splendidly you rode him, too, Mr. Kilbarry! The victory is all owing to the cool, quiet way you handled him. I know enough of horses to see that he can't be other than awkward at his fences.'

'Oh, he's right enough; not a confidential cob for an old gentleman to ride, *yet*, you know. Good, resolute goer. Gave me a very pleasant ride. Hullo! there's the very man I wanted to see—your admirer, the pretty Lambkin. This is luck. What fun, too, that he should have seen us here together. By jingo! here he comes. Now for a touch of the "heavy villain" of melodrama!'

And so saying, Tommy drew back when he heard Lord Lambkin's simpering 'How de do?' leaving him to talk to the heiress.

That interview was a brief one. The lady evidently snubbed the lord, and, raising his glossy Lincoln & Bennett, he turned disconsolately away, but had not got twenty yards when a hand tapped him lightly on the shoulder, and the voice of the Honourable Thomas Kilbarry said,—

'I want a word or two with you, Lord Lambkin.'

The hope of the Muttonheads turned short round and replied,—

'Oh, certainly. It's Mister—Mister——'

'I think you know well enough who it is that's addressing you, Lord Lambkin. My name's Kilbarry. I understand, sir,' he continued, 'that you have had the audacity—that you have dared, sir, to pay attention to Miss Le Pays, the lady to whom I—I, sir—am engaged. Don't interrupt me, sir, I beg. There is but one course open to you, and that is to give me satisfaction. I shall at once send a friend to you ——'

But at this point Tommy had to stop, or he would have given way and laughed outright, for Lord Lambkin had gone ashy pale, and the freckles on his face stood out in bold relief.

'I—I assure you, my dear sir, you are quite mistaken,' he gasped, as he viewed the apparently irate Hibernian glowering at him. 'Nothing could be farther from my thoughts. Don't, I beg, do anything violent. I will gladly resign any thoughts I might have had ——'

'Lord Lambkin,' interrupted Tommy, severely, 'you cannot trifle with me. A duel is inevitable.'

'I swear to you!' the other exclaimed, 'I don't want to marry her a bit. I'll give her up—I'll do anything you wish!' and there was almost a sob in his voice as he concluded the sentence.

'Do ye mane it?' said the Honourable Tommy, who unconsciously relapsed into a bit of a brogue when engaged in any 'diversion,' as they of his native isle would call it.

'On my sacred word of honour, yes,' replied Lambkin, trembling with mingled fear and earnestness.

'Then you're not such a bad fellow after all,' quoth Tommy. 'Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll meet you fairly in the matter. If you'll give her up and tell her old humbug of a guardian so, I pledge myself to do the same.'

'No!' said his Lordship, in astonishment. 'Do you really mean it?'

'I do,' said Tommy, and they shook hands on the compact. 'When will you come down to Bath with me?'

'To-morrow, if you like,' replied the timorous, but now effusive lordling.

'It's a bet—I mean, a bargain,' rejoined Tommy. 'Meet me at the Paddington Station, and we'll go down together in the "Flying Dutchman" to-morrow morning. And now, as I've to ride Isabel' (and he spoke with marked emphasis as he pronounced the name) 'in the next race, I must be off.'

Tommy's luck deserted him this time. Whether 'Isabel, late Cruiskeen,' felt out of temper at the idea of her name being changed or not, we cannot say. Certain it is, however, that she never ran kindly at any part of the race, and after sticking her head awkwardly up in the air at one or two of the earlier fences, she made a sad hole in her manners by a fatal blunder at the last regulation ditch, her rider, however, managing to fall 'clever,' as he usually did, and getting off with nothing worse than a shaking. Miss Le Pays, who had witnessed the upset through her glasses, was much relieved as she saw the red-and-black-jacketed figure rise leisurely to its feet, and walk off back to the paddock.

After the penultimate race, in which the heiress's other horse, The Banker, ran an ignominious last, Tommy left for London, without informing Miss Le Pays of his next move against the General, or of the upshot of his interview with Lord Lambkin.

Next morning he found himself once more journeying to Bath, this time accompanied by his Lordship.

To say that the gallant General looked astonished at seeing the twain walk into his study, but feebly describes his real state of mind. Vulgarly speaking, the information of which they were the bearers fairly 'knocked the stuffing out of him.' They briefly announced that they had come to an understanding, by which each of them resigned his claim to the lady's hand.

Then the General's fury blazed forth in all its impotent

grandeur, and by degrees he managed to work himself up into such a rage, that apoplexy seemed almost about to claim him for its own.

'The whole of London will ring with it ; my ward and I will be made a laughing-stock ! What the devil do you mean by such conduct, eh ? Am I dealing with two sane men or—or a couple of Bedlamites ?' he roared.

'Calm yourself, General, I beg,' began Tommy, coolly. 'Our decision is final, and you can't very well bring an action for breach of promise against either or both of us. It wouldn't look well, you know. At the same time, the awkward situation of Miss Le Pays merits our most respectful sympathy. For a young girl so eminently charming to be left like the "maiden all forlorn," bereft of both her lovers, and with nobody ——'

But here the General could stand it no more. He screamed, rather than said,—

'Left with nobody ! left with nobody, you miserable jackanapes ! I'd have you to know, sir, that at the present moment my ward is beloved by a most estimable young man, a young man in whom I—— What are you shaking your head about, sir—eh ?' and he positively glowered on Tommy in his rage.

'I expect this estimable young man you speak of is only after her money, General,' rejoined his tormentor, with a solemn shake of the head.

'D——n your impudence !' bellowed the ancient warrior. 'He is a man of large fortune, who would make one of the most desirable of husbands except that he has no——' (Tommy nearly added 'title' at this juncture). 'But it don't matter. Sooner than have it appear that she has been thrown over by any such miserable numskulls as you, she shall be engaged to him at once. Damme, sir, she shall marry him this week !' and the General almost foamed at the mouth with fury.

'I doubt if you could get him, General,' calmly observed Tommy, as though still incredulous.

'Oh, do you, sir ! do you ! do you !' he exclaimed, hotly, trying, however, to calm himself sufficiently to be sarcastic. 'Then if you are in Bath to-night,' he added, as he tore off a telegraph form from the package lying on his desk, and hastily scribbled a few words on it in pencil, 'you shall see for yourself. He shall call upon you at your hotel, and—and d——n me if he shan't punch both your heads for you. Now be good enough to leave my house at once !'

"Knocked the hurdles flying"

ALFRED




Even when they got outside poor little Lambkin's teeth did not cease chattering. He had 'run mute,' as Kilbarry called it, throughout the interview, and now insisted upon making the best of his way to the railway station without waiting to have his head punched, as had been so genially suggested by General Browne. The representative of the future glories of the house of Muttonhead declined to even return to the hotel for luncheon, so great was his anxiety to get away.

The plot had succeeded beyond the wildest expectations of its concocters, and the simple way in which the fiery guardian had fallen a victim was most gratifying to them. It is hardly needful to say that Frank Denison came down to Bath that night on the wings of the wind, or, more correctly speaking, in the Great Western express. He went to see the General, received his blessing, and then hurried to the hotel in which the Honourable Tommy was smoking a huge cigar and reading the *Sporting Life*. The explosions of laughter that followed upon the meeting between the two young men formed a fitting *finale* to a most successful day, but it certainly did not sound as though any head-punching were going on, in spite of the General's threat. To the present day, that gallant warrior has not the faintest idea of how gloriously humbugged he was in the matter. 'Bold' was presented to Tommy as a little *souvenir* of the incident, and he has won two or three good races with him since. It is almost needless to add that no more welcome guest than the Honourable Tommy is ever seen at the table of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Denison.

CONGER CATCHING ON THE ROCKS.

By 'CINQFOIL.'

HAT shall we do to-morrow? We can't very well shoot, now that the General isn't coming till Thursday,' said our host, as we settled down to tobacco, with whiskeys and sodas, in the smoking-room after the ladies had retired.

We were a merry party, and had been staying at The Grange for a week enjoying ourselves very much, and giving a fair account of the birds, which were, for Somersetshire,

numerous and strong on the wing. We were to have shot every day, but we had been put off by the non-arrival of General Fairfax, a rich uncle of our hostess, Mrs. Sedley, for whom the best beat had been carefully kept quiet.

'Oh, my dear fellow,' said Jack Langton, a tall, good-looking sub. in a cavalry regiment, a thorough sportsman, though a shocking bad shot, 'we'll amuse ourselves all right, don't you be afraid; there's lots of things to do—we can play tennis with the girls, or take them down to the stream and show them how to catch trout.'

'Yes, I daresay, on a blazing day like to-day. A lot of fish you'd catch, wouldn't you?' rejoined Alick Sedley, a lively youngster from Trinity Hall.

'Well, never mind; you can choose the coolest places and show them how they ought to try'—an answer which raised a general laugh, for that ingenuous youth had been, a day or two before, unearthed from a shady nook at the bottom of the shrubbery, where he calmly asserted he was explaining to his pretty cousin how to play cricket.

Various projects were discussed, and it was almost resolved that, if it should be as hot as it had been for the last two days, the wisest plan would be to do as little as possible.

'Well, my suggestion is that we take old Nellie and the terriers and go a hunting of the wily conger,' exclaimed the mercurial undergrad., as he climbed out of the depths of a wicker chair; 'and now I'm off to bed, and you grave and reverend signors can ponder over my words of wisdom.'

This was greeted with derision by Jack Langton and myself, but Alick, dodging a yellow-back which was hurled at his head, said, 'I should, indeed; it's a doosid good game, and the tide will be just right. Bye, bye!'

'What on earth does he mean?' I asked of our host, who had turned to a tide table.

'How on earth, or rather on sea, are you to hunt conger with a dog? Can't be done,' opined the cavalry man, stretching his long legs.

'Oh, yes it can,' said Tom; 'but it's a filthy dirty job—a regular mudlarking expedition. They lie up among the rocks at dead low water, and there's no end of fun to be got out of a big conger.'

'But where do the dogs come in?'

'Old Nellie here'—stooping down and patting a handsome

Devonshire spaniel, which was lying asleep on the rug—'will find them for us, and the rest of the pack will hunt them. They leave a rare scent, and then they are nearly always in view.'

'Well, by Jove! I should like to see it. I've hunted most sorts of beasts, but I never hunted a fish before,' said I.

'Yes, I tell you what we will do. We will drive over, leave the trap at the pub at Putsham, and then have a go at the conger, so long as the tide will serve, which will be till about two o'clock. We will then have a wash and a change, and the ladies shall have lunch ready for us in the wood on the edge of the cliffs, and we will come home quietly afterwards; but mind, you chaps, it's a most outrageously muddy game, so you had better put on any old flannels you possess, or something you never hope to wear again.'

Next morning at breakfast Tom announced the programme for the day, which met with general approval, subject to the condition, most strongly insisted on by Mrs. Sedley, that we should have the dogs thoroughly washed as soon as ever we had finished, otherwise the ladies would decline to imperil their frocks by coming to meet us.

'I've seen this sort of thing before,' she said to me, as she handed me a second cup of coffee; 'and you have no idea the objects you will all be—and the dogs will be, if anything, rather worse.'

Our appearance, when ready to start, was greeted with shouts of laughter; and even the face of the discreet and usually imperturbable butler was not proof against the temptation.

The under-keeper came up laden with several long, pliant ash sticks, an iron bar, and several heavy sticks like hockey clubs; these he stowed under the seat, while Alick produced a golfing-iron.

'You're not going to play golf, surely!' exclaimed Miss Valpy, who was one of the party.

'No,' he replied; 'but it's a very useful weapon to stop a conger with, and not nearly so dangerous as that nasty gaff Tom has got hold of.'

'Never mind, I'm not going to let any of you youngsters have it,' Tom rejoined; 'you'd gaff one another or a dog as likely as not.'

We were soon all on board the waggonette, including the keeper and his boy, who was grinning with delight at such a change in his daily occupations.

We drove for several miles along the base of the Quantock Hills, through Nether Stowey, and past Holford Glen and Alfoxton, classic ground to lovers of Coleridge and Wordsworth, and soon found ourselves at a small inn yclept 'The Hood Arms,' where we left our bags and the carriage, and went on down to the beach.

The tide was out, and under the lias cliffs was a stretch of curious rocky shore about a quarter of a mile broad, strewn in some places with boulders curiously piled together, in others presenting a comparatively smooth appearance, the surface being divided by cracks running at right angles to one another, making the whole look like a badly laid stone pavement. A thin coating of shiny deposit left by the tide—for the Bristol Channel hereabouts is far from *blue*—lay over the whole.

The dogs scampered about with delight at getting free after their rather cramped position in the waggonette, and were as motley a crew as we were ourselves. Nellie (the spaniel) and four terriers—Pincher, a rough-coated lemon-eared dog, hailing from the kennel of that celebrated breeder and sportsman, the Rev. 'Jack' Russell, whose recent death we all deplored; a smooth-coated fox-terrier, Vic, and her six-months'-old son, Venom, bearing a strong family likeness to Pincher; while a nondescript, owned and loved by the keeper's boy, and looking like a cross between an Irish terrier and a beagle, completed the pack. A jar of cider was put to cool in a small stream, which came tumbling down a little gorge in the cliffs, and then we sallied forth to find the congers, our host begging us to remember all the cautions he had given us as to not hitting one another or the dogs.

The dogs ranged far and wide across the brown, shining mass, over which we slipped and scrambled, having great difficulty in keeping our feet.

'Yoi, Nellie—yoi, there—good bitch!' cried the keeper, as she appeared very busy, and then marked unmistakably at a hollow under a long flat stone which lay half supported by another.

The gallant sub. rushed forward, and—alas! for the spotless purity of his flannels—sat down suddenly, and rolled over, getting up smothered in mud.

'Confound the slippery stuff!' he exclaimed, as he regained his feet, none the worse, but rather ruffled at our peals of laughter.

A whistle brought the other dogs to the spot, and then Tom

began roking under the stone with his stick. Presently a slight movement was perceptible among the slime, and out slipped a conger. 'Only a little chap, let the dogs have him.' Nellie had the first hold, but let him slip, and away the little wriggling brute went as hard as he could go towards a pool about ten yards off, which he was not destined to reach. Pincher and the nondescript soon had hold of him, and a few vigorous shakes sufficed to break him up, as he was quite a small one, under two pounds in weight.

'That'll make 'em keener,' remarked the keeper, as he took the remains away from them.

We went on trying all the likely places with our sticks, and routing out several small congers, which were picked up by the dogs or knocked on the head, and handed over to the boy, who severed the spinal cord with a knife—the only possible way of killing a conger.

It was hot work. The slippery surface on which we were moving made it very hard to get about fast, and the sun was blazing down on us in a way which made an adjournment to the jar of cider a necessity. Cider is not a drink I much affect, as a rule, but on this occasion it went down like nectar—'very suant like,' as the keeper remarked.

'Nellie's marking, sir!' called out the boy, who had kept a watchful eye on the dogs; 'and the others are at it, too.'

We started up, and began to run over the treacherous slime as hard as we could go, first one and then another slipping up, and demonstrating the truth of the saying, 'More haste less speed,' whilst the excited yapping of the terriers showed that they had a conger.

A long, shallow crack between two stones ended in a little pool of mud, which showed that it had been recently stirred up. The conger had been lying there basking, and the dogs had pounced on him; but he had succeeded in making good his escape to an overhanging boulder, under which, in a mass of muddy slime, he had ensconced himself. The dogs were all barking furiously, except the pup, who was sitting down licking a nasty bite on his side, from which the blood flowed freely. Sticks were thrust under the rock in vain; we could feel the conger, but could not get him to move.

'He's a good un, I can feel that,' said Barker, as he rattled his stick about. 'Can you reach him with your gaff, sir? elseways we shall have to leave him, unless we can move the stone.'

The gaff had the effect of making him change his position, but Tom failed to get hold enough to draw him out, so recourse was had to the iron bar, and, after much exertion on all our parts, the rock began to move.

‘That’s it; now up and down a bit, and look out, you other chaps.’

After a few moments more work we got the boulder fairly rocking, and stood round anxiously watching.

‘You must be grinding him to powder,’ I said, as the heavy mass swayed to and fro, sending the slime squelching out in all directions.

‘It takes a mortal deal to hurt a conger, sir,’ said the keeper with a grin, as the perspiration ran down his sunburnt face.

A yap and a worry from Pincher behind us showed that the wily eel had found an exit we could not see under the mud, and was making off across the open for the sea, a distance of about two hundred and fifty yards, for it was now dead low water.

‘Let the dogs have a turn,’ shouted Tom Sedley, as we started in pursuit.

It was a curious sight. The huge shiny brute, looking like an animated section of a fire-engine hose about six feet long, pursued his sinuous way, snapping right and left at the dogs, who were attacking him on both sides. Their efforts were of no avail; they might just as well have worried a fire hose for any effect they produced. They could get no hold whatever on the tough, slippery skin, and they knew too well to go close to those powerful jaws. Even the puppy, forgetting the smarting of his side, joined in the *mêlée*. As they neared the water’s edge the keeper and his boy got in with a rush, and picked up the dogs, while we hurried on to try to finish off the conger with our sticks before he should reach the sea. We had to hurry not a little, for the pace the brute managed to keep up was astonishing. We plied our clubs with all our might, but with little effect. You might just as well have struck at a solid piece of indiarubber—in fact, the heavy sticks ‘came back’ just like balls off a billiard cushion.

Alick scrambled ahead, and got right in the path with his golfing-iron, so as to have a fair drive at the head as the brute came on; but he missed, and promptly sat down rather heavily, while the eel pursued his way without taking the slightest notice of him.

Tom Sedley, coming cautiously on, got his gaff well in

about the shoulder, and tried to hold him up, but he gave a powerful twist with his tail and flung himself clear, though in doing so he changed his direction and received a smashing blow with the iron bar which Barker carried. This enabled Alick to get up once more with his iron, and this time he got fairly home on the brute's head, which seemed partly to stun him. Tom, coming up with his gaff, managed to get a hold under the throat and lift his head, while Barker, with a heavy knife, skilfully severed the vertebræ just at the back of the 'poll,' as he described it.

It was hot work, and we towed our slimy spoil off to where the jar of cider still reposed in the cool stream. How that drink did hiss as it went down, to be sure. We looked in triumph at our foe, and tried to estimate his weight, arriving at a result which was hardly borne out by the scale afterwards.

'Is there no easier means of killing a big conger?' I asked. 'It seems rather brutal to batter it to death in that way.'

'None whatever,' replied Tom; 'you can't do anything which they can feel. So far as one can tell, they are impervious to everything; but we must not wait here if we are to make a bag, for there's only about forty minutes more before the tide will be up over the best places.'

Off we started once more, and soon were hard at it again, getting several fair-sized fish, but nothing to equal the big one we had turned out before.

Hot and dirty we returned to the shore and counted up our spoils, when the rising tide flowed over the rocks which formed the haunts of the conger and put an end to our sport. We had killed fifteen in all, without counting the one the dogs tore to pieces as we commenced. They were not an inviting collection, but we felt rather pleased with ourselves as we hauled them off to the friendly inn, where tubs and clean clothes awaited us.

As we toiled up the steep lane we met the girls coming down to look for us, and then, for the first time, realised the utterly filthy mess we were in—faces, hands, and clothes alike plastered with the brown slime, and had to endure many jeers and uncomplimentary criticisms on our appearance. The ladies took refuge on the further side of the gate, and there remained until we got the dogs safely shut up in the yard.

The first thing we did was to weigh our spoils, which we found to amount to the respectable total of eighty-two pounds. The largest weighing twenty-nine, after which came one at eight,

one at seven, two at five, and two at four, the remaining eight weighing twenty pounds between them.

How delightful it was to get off those filthy clothes, plunge into a cold tub, and cleanse our faces from the nasty salt slime with which we were all so plentifully besmeared. Then a long drink while we dressed, and then, respectably clad once more, we rejoined the ladies, who had by this time got an ample lunch spread out for us under a shady tree—tongue and a salad, and green-butter sandwiches, with peaches to wind up with, and plenty of excellent tippie to wash them down. After lunch we reposed at our ease, and blew clouds of tobacco while we recounted our own adventures and each other's mishaps.

The afternoon sun was lighting up the yellow gorse and purple heather on St. Audries Fire Beacon, making the hillside look like a blaze of gold, in strong contrast to the clear, bright green of the oak coppices which clothe the steep sides of Douseborough, when we prepared to start for home. We were loth to tear ourselves away from such a lovely scene, but we had a long drive before us, and were beginning to feel stiff and sore after our exertions and frequent falls, so we packed up the lunch basket and were soon bowling along home, our hostess congratulating herself on the acquisition of the material for making such a soup as should gladden the heart of the General whose non-arrival had driven us to such a novel form of amusement.

SHOOTING LUNCHEONS.

BY 'SCRAMO.'



HERE seems to be a great diversity of opinion as to how the inner man should be catered for in the way of lunch whilst out shooting. One very seldom meets with the happy medium, it is generally either over or under done. Talking of the latter, the most curious experience I have had of it happened when shooting one day with an old Scotch laird.

We had a very hard walk all the morning, and about half past one I began to feel somewhat hungry, especially as I had made an early breakfast and an early start, having had to drive eight miles to the shoot.

'I wonder when we are going to lunch?' queried my brother, who formed one of the party.

'I suppose about two, I can't hold out much longer though,' I answered.

Two o'clock came, yet no sign of lunch. I had noticed the keepers and keepers choosing some dry bread and cheese while they were at work, and thought it rather strange.

At half past two my brother remarked that he supposed we were working up to a farmhouse we saw in the distance, where we should be rewarded with a sumptuous repast; but no! on we trudged, feeling fainter and fainter, when I looked at my watch and found it was three o'clock. I could stand it no longer, so went up to the laird and said, — 'I say, Mr. M—— I'm so hungry, I can hardly get my gun up to my shoulder, what time are we going to lunch?'

'Lunch!' he squeaked, with a high falsetto voice. 'Lunch!! what do young fellows like you want lunch for? I never take it myself, and I'm three score and ten!'

He certainly looked as if he had been manufactured out of leather with a blunt knife.

'Well I'm hanged if I move another step till I get something to eat,' said my brother, boiling over with rage.

'I couldn't if I wanted to,' I replied.

We both sat down under a tree, and simply struck work!

At last one of the keepers was sent off to a farmhouse, and brought back a jug of milk, some 'baps' and home made cheese, with which we had to be satisfied for want of something better.

Neither my brother nor I shot with that Scotch Laird again!

Within a week, and within six miles I met with the opposite experience.

I went to shoot with a noble lord who was extremely fond of showing off.

He did not shoot, but came out to slang the keepers; he knew nothing about sport, but liked to show his authority.

'Time for lunch,' he called out in the middle of a drive. We were covert shooting and out we had to pull, nobody daring to suggest that we should finish the beat!

We were marched off to one of his lodges that faced the high road, and just inside the lodge gates a large table was laid out so that all the passers by should see it, garnished as if for a dinner party, with a butler and four powdered flunkys in attendance, and a *chef* very much *en evidence*.

We had soup, fish, entrées, roasts, &c., &c., in fact it was nothing less than an alderman's feast, champagne, chablis, port, sherry, liqueurs, &c., followed by superb cigars and coffee. We of course wasted much time over this repast, much to the disgust of the head keeper and the real sportsmen.

However, the little lord had to be humoured with his hobby.

The shooting was not so deadly after lunch as it was before !

This is an example of how it can be overdone ; but anyhow it was preferable to shooting all day on an empty stomach, though scarcely sportsmanlike.

There is no doubt that if one is taking hard exercise, it is absolutely necessary to feed well in the middle of the day. A plain good lunch, however, is all that is wanted, and there is no reason why it should not be done comfortably.

A relation of mine with whom I shoot a great deal, does what I consider the proper thing. At lunch time, if the weather is fine, one of Edgington's paragon tables, which rolls up into a very small compass, with seats to match, is laid out in a sheltered spot, when we regale ourselves with good cold joints, baked potatoes, cake, biscuits and cheese, accompanied by either beer, or whisky and soda, with a 'tot up' of good old brown sherry. The beaters are supplied with plenty of cold meat, bread, and slices of cold plum pudding, washed down with a copious supply of beer, and then an ounce of baccy to each man. Needless to say, they all start again thoroughly refreshed and happy with themselves and their master.

It is a shame to see the way the beaters, who have all the hard work to do, are treated in some places—very often they have nothing more satisfying to work on than a piece of stale bread and a junk of rank cheese.

In cold weather I have seen at some shootings a lunch-cart come out with a huge cauldron of excellent Irish stew, steaming hot, and after the 'guns' have eaten to their heart's content, the remainder is served out to the keepers and beaters. This is an excellent plan where it is practicable.

In Yorkshire, when driving grouse late in the season on a well-known moor, we had for lunch most delicious pies made with grouse, rabbits, and potatoes, and although they had to be brought some six or seven miles from the lodge, they were as hot as if they had just come out of the oven, having been carried in a clothes basket wrapped up in blankets. The blankets must be new ones.

The Yorkshire folk take a lot of beating in the way of pie making.

What is more unsatisfactory than a small thin dry sandwich with the crust cut off? what is there in it to sustain one? Yet this is all the lunch which is sometimes provided by a parsimonious host. When staying in a house for a shoot, and I know that this is what to expect, I make it a rule to prepare my own lunch at the breakfast table. N.B.—If you have to do this, do it *before* breakfast, as you will take more care over it if you are feeling hungry at the time!

‘By Jove, this is the best part of the day!’ I remarked to my host on one occasion after a morning of very indifferent sport, as we sat down to a really good repast. I meant the remark as a compliment, but he took it as a slur on the sport, and being a particularly touchy man, I was never asked to shoot there again!

Ladies are very fond of putting in an appearance at a shooting lunch; this is all very well if they go home with the empty dishes, but when you are addressed as follows in a pleading tone: ‘Oh! Mr. So-and-So, *do* you mind me standing beside you while you shoot?’ What are you to do unless you are downright rude and refuse point blank; your sport is spoilt for *the* afternoon if you are one of the guns posted forward, in covert shooting especially. Ladies will not and cannot keep quiet, they get excited and make the birds break back. I cannot vote for woman suffrage in the shooting field.

Some sportsmen are never content unless they sit down in the dining-room for lunch and do the thing comfortably. This is all very well if you happen to be shooting the home coverts and are within easy access of the house, but when you are sometimes a couple of miles from your residence and are trudged off ‘to do it comfortably at home’ it is somewhat conducive to inward grumblings, both from the keen sportsmen and the keepers who want game killed.

How careless, by the way, some fellows are with their guns at luncheon time. I have often seen guns thrown down on the grass at full cock without the cartridges being extracted, with dogs roaming about in dangerous proximity to the triggers. I once gave a friend of mine a lesson which he deserved. I noticed that he had done what I have just described; so quietly took out the cartridges and extracted the shot and then replaced them. After we had finished eating I began to chaff him about his shooting; he was a good but careless shot.

'I'll bet you a sovereign you don't kill the first bird you fire at,' I said to him.

'Done with you,' he replied, adding the remark, 'you are a juggins! I'll wait till I get a sitter!'

'Never mind,' I answered, 'I've often seen sitters missed after lunch.'

We picked up our guns and with trepidation I watched him. He 'broke' his gun, and seeing the cartridges all right as he supposed, snapped it up again much to my relief. As we wended our way to the next beat a retriever bolted into a hedge-row close by, when one of the keepers called out, 'here's a wounded pheasant, gentlemen, it may rise again.' My friend cocked his gun, exclaiming, 'Get your sovereign ready, old boy.' Out fluttered a hen pheasant scarcely able to fly right in front of him in the open. 'Bang,' then 'bang' again, and on fluttered the bird. 'Well, I'm—shan't say what,' he yelled, 'never missed a shot like that in my life before.' He was greeted with roars of laughter from all present and felt much chagrined at making such a fool of himself. He paid me the sovereign that evening and I then told him what I had done. He wanted his money back, but I wouldn't give it to him, and sent it to the local Infirmary, and I think it taught him a good lesson.

Some sportsmen fall off in their shooting after they have had their mid-day repast, generally through over-indulgence; others shoot better, myself amongst them. On one occasion out partridge shooting I shot abominably badly all the morning, having been at a ball the night before, and felt consequently anything but fit. I knew I should feel all right after I had had something to 'fettle' me up again. One of the sportsmen had noticed how I was off the spot, and having an eye to business, offered at lunch time to back his afternoon's bag against mine for a fiver. I took him up at once and two under-keepers were told off to keep the score. I never shot better in my life, and at the end of the day, much to his disgust and astonishment, had considerably more than doubled his bag. He was much chaffed by the others. But he scored off me in so far as I never saw him again and never saw his fiver! If I should ever happen to come across him I shall offer to shoot him double or quits for what he owes me.

The shooting lunch is often the scene of chaff, practical joking, &c. The worst practical joke I ever played out shooting was as follows. It was a big covert shoot and one of the party



Pandemonium was nothing to it



was a particularly nervous little man, and knowing we should lunch in a corrugated iron hut put up for the purpose in one of the coverts, I armed myself with a bundle of the largest Japanese crackers, these resemble forty or fifty squibs all strung together on the same fuse. After we had lighted up our pipes I placed the crackers underneath the chair of our nervous little friend and touched the end of the fuse with the embers of my pipe and moved to the opposite end of the hut. In a few moments pandemonium was nothing to it. I never heard such a row in all my life, the reports of the crackers were more than trebled by the vibration in the iron hut. All the sportsmen tumbled one over the other in their efforts to reach the door, and the nervous little man was seen clinging round the neck of the one nearest him. The keepers and beaters who were eating their lunch just outside the hut made a clean bolt of it, as did also the horse with the game waggon, who legged it for all he was worth, and was only brought up by a thick laurel hedge into which he got firmly stuck and had to be cut out, luckily for me, not much the worse. In a short time the men came trooping back to see what damage had been done, and their faces lengthened at the sight of the fumes of smoke issuing from the door and all the crevices of the hut, being under the impression that all our cartridges had exploded from some reason or other. The general effect was rather more serious than I anticipated, and although our host tried to look straight, he could not help bursting out laughing at the extraordinary antics cut by his guests (especially the little nervous one) in their endeavours to escape from the exploding crackers. It was a silly joke and luckily ended in smoke.

LUCK.

By NATHANIEL GUBBINS.



HE amount of superstition which exists on the Turf would make the President of the Thirteen Club grey, did he but know of it.

A backer of my acquaintance was about to travel by rail to Kempton Park, in May last year, on purpose to have 100*l.* on Avington for the Jubilee Handicap. Before the train started, a lady with a pronounced squint took her seat im-

mediately opposite him. My friend promptly alighted from that carriage, and spent the rest of the afternoon in the British Museum. His delight, upon reading in the evening paper the success of Avington, can be more easily imagined than described.

Matthew Dawson, like all Scotchmen, has faith in omens, lucky and unlucky. Years ago, when training at Ilsley, he was on his way to the nearest railway-station with some horses, including Canobie, engaged in the Great Metropolitan Stakes at Epsom on the following day. They had not proceeded far when a magpie flew right across their path. The cavalcade was at once halted, and the trainer reverently raised his hat.

‘D’ye see the other one?’ he presently inquired of his head lad.

‘No, sir,’ was the reply; and, indeed, the second magpie had not come on the scene.

‘Then take ’em back; we’ll not go to-day,’ was the order; and back went the string to Ilsley.

A fresh start was made early next morning; no magpie was on view, and a few hours later, Canobie was hailed the winner of the ‘Met.’

It is related that on the morning of Kingcraft’s Derby—exactly a quarter of a century ago—those celebrated jockeys, George Fordham and Tom French, were strolling back to the town of Epsom from the Downs, where they had been riding gallops. Presently French picked up a horseshoe.

‘What shall I do with this?’ he asked.

‘Throw it over your left shoulder, Tom,’ replied Fordham.

This was done, and that afternoon he steered Lord Falmouth’s Kingcraft to victory, a twenty to one chance, Macgregor, the ‘hottest’ favourite on record, who had easily beaten Kingcraft in the Two Thousand, being in hopeless trouble at Tattenham Corner.

But probably the most superstitious man who ever went racing, was a certain Colonel (afterwards General) H——. The ‘Wellington’ story has been frequently told in print, but always incorrectly. On the afternoon of the Monday before the Derby of 1856, the Colonel and a friend alighted at Hatchett’s Hotel, on their return from Tattersall’s. Immediately opposite was one side of the Wellington Restaurant, the name being posted on the wall in large golden letters. Happening to glance across the way, the gallant warrior noticed that the ‘W’ had become somewhat displaced.

‘A tip, by Jupiter!’ he cried. And jumping into the hansom out of which he had only just stepped, he drove back to ‘the Corner,’ where he backed Admiral Harcourt’s Ellington to win a very large stake for the Derby.

There is a ‘clock’ in this story, as usually told, but there is no clock in my version.

Another true story of the same gentleman says that on the Goodwood Cup Day of 1865, he was driving along Holborn, citywards, with a friend. The hansom was ‘blocked’ at a certain spot, and the traffic was at a standstill for a minute or two. On a sudden, the glance of the Colonel—who always had his eyes well about him—alighted on the name of a small street on the left—

‘ELY PLACE.’

He was with difficulty dissuaded from jumping out of the cab, in his haste to get to the City. ‘To Charley Bush’s, quick!’ he roared to the driver, and ere a quarter of an hour had elapsed, this firm believer in Providential tips had taken 600*l.* to 100*l.* about Ely—‘the beautiful Ely’—for the Cup, from that widely-known layer.

The story of Fred Webb’s ‘lucky’ mount on Doncaster for the Derby has not, to the best of my knowledge, previously appeared in print, but would seem to point a moral.

In the late spring of 1873, Webb, although he had ridden Digby Grand to victory in the City and Suburban of the year before, was not in particularly flourishing circumstances. He had not yet become a ‘fashionable’ jockey, and but for this chance mount might never have attained to his subsequent celebrity. For talent is as often depreciated on the Turf as elsewhere.

Twenty years ago, the gallops of the Derby horses, on the Tuesday morning, were worth looking at; as, owing to inferior railway arrangements to those of to-day, the horses engaged used, most of them, to reach the scene of action on the Monday. Twenty years before that, many of them arrived the week before, ‘Scott’s lot’ being ridden, or vanned, all the way from Whitewall to Epsom; and one of my earliest recollections is of proceeding with a select company of swells from Victoria to Leatherhead, by special train, on the Sunday before the Derby, to see ‘the Wizard’s’ horses do their winding-up gallops. But that’s another story.

On the Monday night before Doncaster’s Derby, Fred Webb,

and two companions, occupied a treble-bedded room at their lodgings in Epsom. I may interpolate here that this story was told me by one of the trio, who, ten years before, had 'looked after' that celebrated horse Lord Clifden. Two of the party awoke early on the Tuesday morning, and proceeded to wash and dress, before proceeding to the Downs. Webb, however, slumbered a little longer, and, moreover, was evidently in dreamland. With both arms outside the coverlet, he from time to time flourished them about, as if in the act of 'screwing-in' his horse's head, at the finish of a desperate race.

'Fred, Fred!' shouted one of his companions; 'wake up, man! What the d——I are you doing?'

And presently the sleeper awoke.

'By Jove!' he exclaimed, 'I've had the most extraordinary dream. D'you know, you fellows, I dreamt that I was winning the Derby!'

And they laughed him to scorn; for at that moment the chances seemed equally favourable to his being offered the Crown of Great Britain, as the jockeys for the principal favourites had been engaged months before.

But, as the French sage observed, it is the unexpected which is always happening.

The three walked up to the Downs, by way of the Durdans, and the first racehorse they saw was a great strapping chestnut, who filled his quarter-sheet particularly well, being led about in the vicinity of the Paddock. Standing close by was Mr. Robert Peck, at that time a trainer of some eminence. He 'wore a worried look;' his intellectual brow was furrowed with the lines of trouble. No wonder; the big chestnut was Mr. James Merry's Doncaster, and James Snowden, who was to ride him in the Derby, had not put in an appearance. At length the trainer could wait no longer.

'Here, Webb,' he observed to our hero, 'just get up, will you, and take this horse the Derby course, at three-parts speed?'

In another second or two the jockey was in the saddle, and the horse seemed to go so well under him that the trainer was pleased.

'Are you going to ride anything in the Derby?' he asked, as Webb threw himself off.

'No, sir.'

'Then you shall ride this horse.'

And he did. And unless rumour lied most horribly, the

Scottish ironmaster won nearly as much over that Derby as he did by the success of Thormanby thirteen years before. Anyhow, Fred Webb received most substantial recognition of his services; and although increasing weight now keeps him out of the saddle, save on rare occasions, it may truly be said that he has never 'looked back' since.

'It is better to be born lucky than rich,' says the old proverb, and many a racing man has furnished a living exemplification of the truth of it. Not invariably, however, does the luck (I am treating only of *good* luck now) 'stick;' for more than one so-called 'lucky' owner or backer leaves off playing the Great Game from sheer necessity. And only the other day I had my boots cleaned, very indifferently, by——. But that, again, is 'another story.'

The late Mr. Frederick Swindell combined luck with a considerable amount of astuteness, and a still larger amount of dogged industry and perseverance. The story which describes his walk from his native village in Yorkshire to Liverpool to back Charles XII. for the Cup, is not quite accurate in alluding to this win as Mr. Swindell's 'start in life;' for that start had taken place six years before, when Rockingham won the Leger. It is recorded of this gentleman that for days before this race he used to sit in the 'Post Office Hotel' at Manchester—where, at that time, many a big commission used to be worked—in order to 'mouse out' every atom of information he could, and that on one occasion an acquaintance found him there, apparently reading a newspaper.

'What's th' news, Fred?' asked the friend.

'Thoo can see for thasen, la-ad,' said Swindell.

And the friend, looking over his shoulder, promptly exclaimed, 'Gosh, la-ad! Thoo's gotten un oopside doon!'

Which was, indeed, the fact, as at that time the afterwards-*eminent* Turfite was no scholar.

'Teddy' Brayley was, in his turn, another of the 'lucky' brigade, and, in the sixties, won so many bets that he once expressed himself as being 'sick and tired of winning.' Good fortune, however, did not stay with him to the end. There is an interesting story, in the Brayley connexion, as to the lucky circumstances which induced him to start Mornington (after whom the crack jockey of to-day was named) for the City and Suburban of 1873. This was told me by the man who 'got the money on,' and has also never previously appeared in type.

A week before the Epsom Spring Meeting of that year, 'Teddy' and his commissioner were chatting together at the Victoria Club over future events.

'What price is my horse, Tommy?' at length asked the owner of Mornington.

'Forty to one for the City, and twenties for the Metrop.,' was the reply.

'Then put me a monkey on,' said Mr. Brayley, who did not specify the race.

The 'lists' were visited next morning, and the commissioner took 20,000*l.* to 500*l.* about Mornington for the City and Suburban. The deal was duly reported to his principal, who appeared not a little surprised at the magnitude of the price.

'Oh,' observed the agent, 'there's plenty more to be got at the same price.'

'You're sure,' inquired Brayley, 'that you backed it for the Great Metropolitan?'

'Not a bit of it,' was the reply. 'It's on for the *City*!'

'Great heavens!' exclaimed the owner. 'You might as well have thrown the money into the street. He runs for the Metropolitan.'

'Well, you never mentioned the race, you know,' said the other. 'But I suppose I must try and save a bit of it?'

'First of all, put me another monkey on the horse—for the Metropolitan this time.'

This was done, and, owing to the other investment having sent the horse back to twenty-five to one for the longer race, those were the odds obtained.

'And now, about saving the other money?' inquired the commissioner.

'Leave it alone,' said Teddy. 'Now the mischief is done, I may as well run the horse in both races.'

And, ridden by Sam Mordan, Mornington won the City and Suburban, and, on the following day, in the hands of Tom Cannon, the Great Metropolitan. Thus, through a lucky mistake, were two great sums of money landed.

The late Sir Joseph Hawley was proverbially the 'lucky' baronet, and he had far more than his share of Fortune's favours until the year 1868, when, with three horses running in the Derby, the one he fancied the least (he made a declaration before the race to win with Rosicrucian or Green Sleeve in

preference to Blue Gown) won cleverly from Baron Meyer de Rothschild's 'forlorn hope,' King Alfred. That little slice of fortune was the means of transferring 90,000*l.* from the exchequer of the 'lucky' baronet to that of an eminent book-maker the following Monday!

The machinations of the Electric Telegraph Department have a great deal to do with luck on the turf. Instances might be quoted in scores of men telegraphing to their agents in cypher to do so-and-so, and the latter mistaking the 'code,' with disastrous and, occasionally, fortunate results. I myself, some ten years ago, wired to my commissioner in London from the country to have 10*l.* on Toastmaster for the Derby Cup at starting price. I had occasion to ride over to Dorking shortly after putting in my message, and, whilst sojourning in that picturesque little town, a wire came to the hotel for the landlord announcing the success of Toastmaster, and giving his starting price as 'tens.' I was naturally elated, and caused the sparkling wine to flow, and, had my cheque-book been handy, would have then and there written out a 'spanker' for the benefit of the poor of the parish. I rode home in the cool of the evening, and, lo! on my hall-table was a telegram addressed to a different name from my own. The message was from my commissioner, and read:—

'Haven't the pleasure of knowing you; so nothing done.'

Some telegraphic clerk, in the course of transmitting the message, had merely substituted somebody else's name for mine. Of course I got no redress, but there was murder in my soul for weeks afterwards.

The late Mr. 'Charley' Head, the big bookmaker, once told me a good story in this connexion. He commenced life as a telegraph clerk, with which occupation he occasionally combined the backing of horses in a small way. One afternoon a message came through his department conveying instructions to an agent to put a large sum of money on a certain horse for the Cumberland Plate. At that time the 'lists' were rampant all over London, and after business hours Head went out and backed this horse for as much as he could afford. But he was not a little 'flabbergasted' at observing that the horse was at a longer price at each list he visited. It afterwards occurred to that astute young man that the telegram might have been meant to be interpreted in a directly opposite sense, and that the intentions of the sender were to *lay against* the horse, instead

of to *back* him. This, indeed, was actually the case ; but young Head got the best of the deal all the same, for, somehow or other, the horse managed to win the Cumberland Plate.

Who does not know the numerous 'dream' stories connected with racing ? I surely need not recall to the recollection of my readers the old Yorkshirewoman's vision a night or two before Merry Monarch's Derby ? Equally well known must be the parable of the trainer's wife, who dreamt a winner for her old man, but subsequently committed the unpardonable sin of dreaming a 'right 'un,' for somebody else. Then, too, the late Lord Vivian's lucky vision of Aldrich winning the City and Suburban has been told previously in the chronicles of that day. The only winner I ever dreamt of was Beadsman for the Derby of 1858. At that time I was a small boy at Eton, and saw in my vision distinctly the arrival of the pigeon (we didn't use the wires in those days), at the small hostelry just over Windsor Bridge, with the winner. The small piece of paper carried by the 'homer' of my dream was inscribed with a simple 'B.' 'And what does "B" stand for ?' I promptly asked. 'Why, "Beadsman," of course,' said the visionary landlord. Well, this dream so worked upon me that in school that very morning I took six shillings to one about Beadsman from a neighbour who had just failed to construe one of the most beautiful passages in the *Æneid* of Virgil. I fancy I took a bit less than the proper odds, but that didn't much matter when the news of the horse's victory arrived. In an evil hour, however, I had recorded the wager upon the fly-leaf of my Greek Testament, and, upon being called up to construe, the very morning after the race, the master (who boasted the very suggestive name of 'Birch') borrowed my book, he having, by a singular coincidence, left his own at home. His roving vision, and my own halting construction of the Gospel according to St. John, combined to 'give me away.' The wager was 'spotted,' and a little later in the day I was requested to call upon the Reverend Doctor Goodford in his own little parlour. I will draw a veil over the painful scene which followed, but cannot altogether forget the previous lecture which I received from the Reverend Mr. Birch.

'Gubbins,' he observed, severely, 'depend upon it that the boy who bets in shillings will, when he becomes a man, bet in *sovereigns* !'

That little lecture came into my head directly after Sir

Hugo had won the Derby, and the 'hundred' which I had staked on La Fleche became 'another's.'

But, to make my Beadsman 'luck' still more complete, the other boy never settled with me.

My own 'luck' has been of a variegated nature. I have escaped a violent death, more than once, in miraculous fashion, upon one occasion being just missed by a 'spent' round shot, which ricocheted within a yard of my head; and upon another only escaping being blown up in an arsenal (with many others) by the capture of the combuster just as he was about to light the fuse which communicated with some thousands of tons of gunpowder. But my racing 'luck' has, I may mention, been like the Bridgenorth election of old, 'all one way,' and that the wrong way. And once, when I had staked the largest sum of money I ever had on a horse, my favourite appeared to be winning in a canter until fifty yards from the winning-post. And then he dropped dead.

RIVALS TO THE LAST.

(A STORY OF WATERLOO.)

By FINCH MASON.

I.

THEY had known one another from childhood, and were the closest friends imaginable—loving one another like brothers indeed—but were rivals all the same. Rivals in the Eton shooting fields;* rivals later on at hunting and shooting, and other manly sports; and last—but not least—rivals in love; but the friendliest of rivals for all that. And now behold them, the Honourable George Daubeney and Frank Greville, both of them officers in the Household Cavalry, the former being in the 1st Regiment of Life Guards, the other in the Blues, bidding good-night, perhaps good-bye for ever and a day, each with the light of love and battle in his eyes, to the Lady Rose, at the close of that historic

* The original title for what are now better known as the 'Playing Fields,' and so called because in former days, before cricket was invented, archery was the favourite practice of the Etonian of the period.

ball given at Brussels by the Duchess of Richmond on the eve of Waterloo.

'Good-night and *au revoir*, is it not?' said Lady Rose, a faint attempt at a smile lighting up the beautiful upturned face.

'Of course it is!' they replied cheerily in one breath; 'and,' added George Daubeney, 'I feel, do you know, Rose, as if we were all three going hunting to-morrow. What fun, eh?'

'So we *are* going hunting, stoopid,' chimed in Frank in his cheery way; 'aren't we going to hunt Boney out of Belgium? What are the trumpets sounding at this moment for, I should like to know? It will be the run of the season, you may depend,' he added; 'and what's more, I mean to be in at the death, and beat your head off into the bargain, George, as usual, see if I don't!'

One more clasp of the white hand held out to each of them, and the two young men hurried off.

'How will it end? oh, how will it end?' exclaimed Lady Rose, the blue eyes filling in spite of herself, as she watched wistfully those retreating figures of her two old playmates. 'And I love them so, I love them so!' she murmured, as she leaned back wearily in her seat, hardly hearing or heeding the voice of her aunt, Lady Eversley, who came up at the moment under the care of a distinguished cavalry officer, as she exclaimed:

'Why, Rose, what on earth is the matter with you? you look quite ill. Come along, child, the General here will see us to our carriage, and we shall reach our hotel just in time to see the troops pass on their way to the front. By the way, Rose, where are the inseparables, George Daubeney and Frank Greville?' went on the lively lady, little knowing or recking the sore heart she addressed. 'Gone! you don't say so! Oh, I *am* so sorry not to have seen them to say good-bye. Why, if there is a battle, I may never see them again. Tell me, General,' said her lively ladyship, tapping the warrior in question playfully with her fan as she spoke, 'you are on the Duke's staff, and should know. Do you think there will really be a dreadful battle, or is it, in your horrid turf parlance, going to be a "walk-over?"'

'As you ask me, Lady Eversley,' replied the officer addressed, somewhat gravely, eyeing, as he spoke, the pale features of her beautiful companion, 'I am bound to say that I think it more than probable that there will be. Napoleon, there is no doubt, is advancing in force, and, if Grouchy can only get up in time, the Frenchmen may give us more trouble than we bargained for. But we shall win in the long run, you may depend, whatever

happens,' he added, with a confident air. 'Don't you think so, Lady Rose?'

Two hours later, and Lady Rose and her chaperone, still in the dresses they had worn at the ball, were to be seen standing on the balcony of their hotel in the Rue Royale, gazing at the troops as they passed underneath, with bands playing and colours flying, on their way to the front, the pale, anxious face of the younger woman contrasting painfully with the matter-of-fact expression on that of her companion, who looked on at the military spectacle before her in much the same way that she would if attending a review in Hyde Park.

'Look, Rose,' she cried, applying a diminutive opera-glass to her eyes, as she spoke, 'here comes that dear Lord Uxbridge with his staff! how *debonnair* and handsome he looks, doesn't he? Let me see, George Daubeney is his aide-de-camp, is he not?' she went on. 'Yes, there he is! and kissing his hand to you, Rose, and not so much as vouchsafing a look to me, the conceited wretch! Oh, yes, *now* he sees me! Good-bye, George, good-bye, you handsome good-for-nothing, you! Well, you *might* have said something to the poor boy, Rose, I *do* think. I had no idea you had so little feeling. A line regiment next: I don't take the slightest interest in the line, and I don't suppose you do either, Rose, do you? What a vile band—just what one might expect—and what a dreadful looking colonel! do look at him, Rose; it will really be quite a charity if he is picked off by a French bullet. Oh, it's all very well for you to say "Oh, Blanche!" but I mean it, I do, indeed. I can't bear that sort of person. Thank goodness, here come the Blues! what a relief, to be sure! See! there's that depraved wretch Rawdon Crawley. I don't fancy that queer little wife of yours will break her heart, if anything happens to *you*, sir, what say you, Rose? And who is the officer just behind—looking straight at us, too? Why, yes, of course it is—Frank Greville! I declare, I didn't recognise him for the moment in his helmet. Speak to him, Rose! say something to him, poor fellow! we may never see him again, you know.'

But the Lady Rose heard her not. She had fainted dead away.

II.

The battle of Waterloo is as good as won.

Lord Wellington, seizing his opportunity, just in the same manner that a jockey, in the finish of a race, times his final rush

to a nicety, orders the whole of the British line to advance, and the cavalry to charge the now-retreating French.

A tremendous cheer goes up, as the welcome order is obeyed by the shattered remnants of the different line regiments, and, bringing their bayonets to the charge, they rush, with an impetus that is irresistible, on the now-disheartened enemy, turning what would otherwise have been a retreat into a disorderly flight. The younger soldiers—Napoleon's latest recruits—threw away their arms, and fled for their lives, the only portion of Napoleon's Grand Army that attempted to make a stand being two or three shattered regiments of the famous Old Guard, composed entirely of veterans who had fought at Austerlitz and Marengo, and were devoted body and soul to the fortunes of their imperial master. These formed into squares, and awaited with undaunted courage the onslaught of our cavalry.

They were not kept long in suspense, for hardly had they got into position when the Blues came thundering down upon them, a young officer, whose plumed cocked hat and scarlet coatee denoted the staff officer, galloping along, waving his sword, some lengths in advance of the leading squadron. It was George Daubeney, who had himself brought the order to charge to Lord Uxbridge.

'Forrard ! forrard !' he shouted, as if well to the front in a run over High Leicestershire, instead of in the midst of a great battle. Then, half turning in his saddle, as he neared the square, he shouted out, 'Frank, old fellow, I shall have the best of *this*, I fancy !' The next instant he fell on his horse's neck, and then to the ground, his body literally riddled with bullets.

So steady and well-directed was the fire from the square, that the leading squadron of the Blues went down to a man. Again and again they charged, but made no impression upon those devoted Frenchmen, whose stronghold seemed impregnable.

Then, a young officer, bareheaded, was seen to single himself out from his men, and, catching hold of his horse's head, a magnificent black thoroughbred, to rush him at racing pace at the square, as if riding at an 'oxer.' He seemed to bear a charmed life, for not a single bullet of the many sent in his direction touched him.

Sitting well back in his saddle, with a dig of the spurs and a shout of encouragement, he went at the biggest fence he had ever ridden at in his whole life.

The gallant horse had no more idea of refusing than his rider,



and the next instant had risen to the leap, and landed handsomely in the middle of the square.

With a triumphant shout of '*I've pounded the field this time, I fancy!*' Cornet Frank sabred away right and left at the soldiers who surrounded him.

He was in imminent danger of his life, and fought like a tiger, but not for long, for his sensational jump had effected the object he had in view when he attempted it, viz., broken up the square, an advantage his comrades were not slow to make use of, with the result that, in a very brief space of time, such of the gallant defenders that were not sabred as they stood were taken prisoners.

'And,' observed Cornet Frank Greville, addressing his black charger, the while he caressed him, 'I wonder if George was anywhere handy and saw you jump that last fence in such style, my beauty. He'd have bid a cool thousand for you on the spot, if he had, I know. Dear old George, how I hope he's all safe!'

* * * *

It was a week after the great battle, and two persons were seated under a tree in the park at Brussels; one a lovely, fair-haired girl, attired in deep mourning; her companion a fine, handsome young fellow, in the undress uniform of the Royal Horse Guards.

'And are you sure you *really* love me, dear Rose?' said the young officer; adding, 'I always thought, do you know, poor George was your favourite.'

'I loved you both,' was the reply, the blue eyes looking steadily into his, 'loved you both so well, that had dear George lived, I don't think I could have had the heart to have given him the preference over you, or you over him.'

'And the same with me,' said her companion. 'George and I were rivals in everything, as you know, ever since our earliest days; but, knowing as I did, how much he loved you, I should never have pressed my suit during his lifetime. But we will never forget him, will we, Rose?'

'Never, Frank, never, never!' and a small white hand stole into one of his, in ratification of the vow.

A MEMORABLE COURSING MATCH.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'

YES, I'll find you, I say, a dog that has never run in public, which, if you will allow me to name time and place, will make rings round yours, best two courses out of three.'

It was old Laird Carrickson who spoke, a shrewd old 'Bonnet Laird' as the squires of small acres are termed in the West of Scotland, a very successful sheep-breeder, a keen greyhound courser, and notorious for his sharpness in making a 'deal' or a catch-bet.

The night was the closing of one of those famous meetings which used to be held at Sharphill, Ardrossan, on the Clyde, when the 'Dutchman' Earl of Eglinton, was the chief patron of the sport in the West of Scotland, and whose kennel held Dusty Miller and many other dogs to which, by the aid of the coursing stud-book, we can trace the pedigrees of some of the most noted performers of the present day. The late Ivie Campbell of Dalgig was to the fore then with his 'word-puzzle'-like nomenclature of Coodareena, Calabaroonna, and Canaradzo, the latter by the famous Beacon, out of the scarcely less famous Scotland Yet, bringing to Scotland for the first time the Waterloo Cup. With Mr. Borron, still with us, and the oldest living Waterloo nominator, residing at Seafield in the vicinity, the Eglinton Kennel, and the noted Stewarton Kennel of the late Dr. Brown, in the immediate vicinity, Ayrshire was ranked as the first coursing county in Scotland. On the death of the 'Dutchman' Earl, and the starting of a pack of hounds by his successor, hares grew scarce as foxes grew plentiful, and there is a difficulty now in getting through a 'sixteen' dog stake, where at one time they could have worked easily off one of sixty-four. The Hyslops were also good supporters of the sport; and Major Graham of Capellie, the founder of the National Coursing Club, and for many years chairman at the annual Waterloo gathering at the Adelphi, Liverpool, always came over from his place in Renfrewshire, to assist in making all the meetings successful, looking out for 'a rough-haired Scotch one' of the old sort, and

of which he was very fond. The Major sleeps quietly under the shadow of the Fereneze Hills by Crofthead, where we saw him laid to rest sixteen years ago. To the last he was as genial and convivial as ever, only a few weeks previous to his death presiding at the annual meeting of the Small Bore Rifle Shooting Club, whose range was in his lands. His farm grieve, John Clews, under his patronage became the best shot in the Scottish Eight, and was known as 'Captain Horatio Ross's Reliable,' the Captain being wont to tell how Clews for eight successful years had shot in the Elcho Competition, in all 400 shots, and *never once missed the target*. With the famous Maida of *Bell's Life* as secretary and chronicler the old Ardrossan gathering was a successful and happy one, the after-evenings being always convivial.

In making a match or accepting one at the close of a Scottish course-meeting, as at a Scotch fair, a remark against cow or dog, if accompanied by a taunt, is apt to make either of the parties somewhat reckless. You may call a Highlander at Falkirk tryst as ugly as a Hottentot, but do not at your peril repeat that sort of compliment regarding his cow. The latter he has got to sell, but personal appearances do not interfere with the completion of what may prove a profitable commercial transaction. For similar reasons you must not hint that a courser's dog runs cunning.

'You say if I'll allow you to name time and place, you'll find a dog that will beat my dog, the champion of the meeting,' replied Dougal of Dougalston, owner of the winner.

'Yes, I will; for I think he's getting wise and wary like yourself in his old age, and hangs back from his hare like a groom keeping correct distance behind a lady.'

'Come, name your dog, time, and place,' was the heated reply; and cover these,' the other said, placing three five-pound notes on the table side by side.

The notes were immediately covered, and the gentlemen called to witness that it was according to custom a fair challenge.

'Your dog,' said Dougal again, somewhat excitedly.

"Herring Fisher"—Jock Wilson's, the Butcher Jock.'

'What!' came the call almost simultaneously from the astonished members of the company. 'He is little better than a lurcher.'

'He's a greyhound, all the same,' said Carrickson; 'and, if I mistake not, came out of your own kennel.'

'Bah!' said Dougal. 'A cur of a puppy I gave him out of a lot I was going to drown, to put to the breast of a terrier bitch that had lost her puppies. You're joking, Carrick; but name your *time* and *place*.

'Holm Lea. Monday night at *nine o'clock*; the moon will be full up then.'

There was a similar murmur of surprise over this, but no one could object. It was a fair challenge, and the money staked had been covered.

'Well, well,' said Dougal, drily. 'It's a time o' night that suits your style of coursing here, but it ill becomes me, a Justice of the Peace, to be out in poaching hours. Still, I dare say dogs will run as fast under the light of the moon as in daylight, and for both dogs it will be the same.'

So it was agreed there and then that the match should be brought off on the following Monday night.

Song and sentiment followed. They are great in the north on sentiment, and on cattle-show nights and coursing evenings they will drink one another's healths three times over. It is wonderful over the tenth tumbler how all the evil things they say about each other seem to fade into oblivion, like the last vibrations of a harp. 'Memories' are also drunk in solemn silence with serious faces, the latest arrival at the family fireside, and sometimes in a jocular fashion those 'domestic blessings' which have given some indication of their approach. Of course there will be a good deal talked of curling, and conditions as to parish bonspiels, and private matches have been laid down ere the meeting disperses. Some songs will have been sung, not a few in the praise of coursing, as

'When Wellington at Waterloo beat all ends up The French
(Though it's generally acknowledged that he killed off Blucher's wrench),
There was many a gallant soldier upon the field lay dead;
But never yet at Altcar has blood of man been shed:
So we're happier than Wellington or even Blucher too,
As upon the plains at Altcar we win our Waterloo.

"Up, guards, and at 'em," was his call. "Up, greyhounds," all call we,
When there's a hare in front of 'em, and when from slips they're free,
The Greys they shouted "Scotland Yet," still "Scotland Yet," we cry.
When thinking of her famous son whose name shall never die,
The gallant Canaradzo, that dog so stout and true,
Who fought for us at Altcar, and won our Waterloo.'

Though Dougal of Dougalston was an Elder of the Kirk as

well as a J.P., he could not drive out worldly things from his mind on the following Sunday. That strange match in the moonlight, with what was little better than a 'village butcher's messun,' an undrowned foundling, snatched from the tub in blind puppyhood, was continually uppermost. Besides, he thought it was far from being decorous, for one in his position, chivalrous as he was in all his wagers and bargains, to be a party to such a match. Why not pay forfeit? What, forfeit to Carrickson? It was not to be thought of.

The afternoon of Monday with him passed slowly. It was indeed like two afternoons telescoped into one. At last the hour arrived, and with John, his man, and The Champion in the box of the dog-cart, he set out for Holm Lea, his friend Dunlop's farm, on which it was agreed the match should take place. The full moon was just rising at the time, and it revealed every ridge and furrow on the beautiful grass slope which led from Holm Lea House down to the sea. Away beyond, stretching over to the Arran Hills, was the Frith of Clyde, a huge silver shield marked here and there with the dark hulls and spectre-like masts of the colliers bound from Ardrossan to Belfast and Derry. Dougal of Dougalston had small heart for scenery at the best of times, and his eyes were on these little moving objects gambolling on the sward. It was a poacher-like trip at the best. Should he come out of it successful.

The party he found were all assembled, rough Jock Wilson, sometimes known as Poaching Jock, and at other times as Trotting Horse Jock, was there with the dark dog, Herring Fisher. Simpson had come over from Cumnock to slip, and Carrickson had agreed that Mr. Dunlop should judge. If Herring Fisher had never run in public, one thing was certain, and that was that he was not unacquainted with slips, as he took to them most kindly. Dunlop got up on his old gig-mare, and followed Simpson closely. They were not long of finding a hare, for many of those which had been lying sewn up in their rush forms all day were now out and gambolling, it being their delight to do so of a shiny night, just as it is that of the poacher who takes them. But the slipper found a difficulty in steadying his dogs upon one, as they jerked and wheeled about like rabbits. Eventually he fairly settled them upon what he thought to be a straight-going, stout one, and the two dogs raced out as the slips flew back to his hand. Tickler, the Champion, drew away three clear lengths from Herring Fisher, and came round smartly

with his game, placing the latter. It was a curious course after that, indeed, for Puss kept jerking and circling in the most funny fashion imaginable with old Dunlop close behind the dogs. That the black dog, Herring Fisher, was holding selfish possession we could plainly see, but did not know how Dunlop would reckon up the points. At length a squeak come through the moonlight haze, and the old farmer riding up said in a clear voice, 'The Black.' So this was one of the three courses to Herring Fisher. We gave them fifteen minutes, and then slipped them to a hare which we saw literally dancing elf-like in the lea rig.

Tickler, a very fast dog, raced straight away this time from his opponent, and bringing his hare round, held his own for next two turns, when Herring Fisher killed and cut his own throat, so far as further scoring was concerned. Both dogs had now won a single course each.

In giving them another fifteen minutes, we walked down, for the night was cold, to a little grass slope on the Fairlie Road by Portincross, and almost opposite the point where Lord Glasgow's coachman on the way from Kelburne (just round the corner), on being told 'to drive to h——,' drove the eccentric old sportsman, horses, coach, and all right into the sea. The grass slope in the moonlight was as clearly, fully revealed to men's eyes as it would be in the daylight; but Jock Wilson chuckled to himself, for he knew, old poaching rascal that he was, that with dogs and hares matters were very different. Was it not Jock, who, when asked to change the blood of the hares over in Loch Semple, where they had been thought over-stocked and getting too inbred, lifted fifty with the nets from the same ground overnight, and sold them to the Laird next morning, to change the blood as fresh hares he had brought from Lancashire. So far as dogs and hares were concerned, no man in the world knew their particular haunts and habits better.

They both got away this time to a very level slip, the Ardrossan Champion in the moonlight misjudging distance and going clean head and heels over the hare. Puss came round to Herring Fisher, who, sticking close to his game, won very cleverly, finishing up with a meritorious kill.

The owner of the the Champion was quite satisfied with the result, but felt somehow that he had been done by his rival laird.

'Look here,' he said, 'Wilson,' when he got the latter aside, 'do you really mean to say your dog has never run in public.'

'I'll swear he hasn't!'

‘Then how does he run in daylight?’

‘Daylight! Bless me, he never saw a hare in daylight in his life, though he’s seen a lot in the night time. As a matter of fact, he never was in slips till I lent him to Laird Carrickson a few nights ago. If ye had told me you were going to make a kind of match like this, I could have let ye ken, man, that no dog, lurcher or greyhound, can work well in the moonlight till they have been accustomed to it. Hares run different, and see different behind them, and dogs do not see so well.’

And Dougal resolved to be equal with Carrickson some other day—*or night*.

A DOUBLE RESCUE.

By ‘BUCKMINSTER.’

THE old farm of Redhill in East Anglia’s bounds
 Was esteemed by all sportsmen who followed the hounds,
 For its master, Will Dean, like his fathers of yore,
 Kept a plentiful stock of the ‘varmint’ in store.
 From this ‘fixture’ they mostly had plenty of fun,
 And its annals were brightened by many a run;
 E’en stray men from the ‘shires’ were oft forced to avow
 They’d ne’er hoped for such capital ‘things’ o’er the ‘plough.’
 But Will’s cash had grown scanty; he saw with alarm
 There was nought but the barley would pay on his farm.
 ‘Till at last in despair to those harpies he went
 Who oblige needy yeomen at sixty per cent:
 The unfortunate wights who their ‘pieces’ require
 Find they’re ‘out of the frying-pan into the fire.’
 The frank face of poor Will bore deep traces of care,
 Scarce three months after harvest his stackyard was bare;
 Then the lenders came down their arrears to demand,
 Or possession to take of Will’s farmstead and land.
 He was bound for the meet at old Saxendine Moor
 When these worthies came up to the Redhill front door.
 But few words were exchanged, for Will hadn’t the cash,
 So the duns were determined our Nimrod to ‘smash.’
 He consigned all the lot to a place far away,
 Vowing nought should prevent him from hunting that day.
 What a picture they made, young Will Dean and his horse,
 As he went across country to Saxendine Gorse!

While the usurers watched him with silent dismay,
For they'd counted on seizing that great slapping grey.
'Ah!' cried one to the others, 'I'm open to bet
A two-hundred-pound fish we've let out of our net.'
For the time our young hero cared less for the law
Than for reaching the covert in time for the 'draw,'
And his spirits uprose as the gorse he drew near
At the sound of the huntsman's melodious cheer;
And the musical beauties soon made a reply,
Which they quickly confirmed, and went off at 'full cry.'
Right away without 'ringing' pug scampered along,
And the work seemed cut out for that hard-riding throng.
Will determined to have his fair share of the fun,
For 'twas quite on the cards this might prove his last run;
He was riding Sir Hercules: never a steed
In the field could surpass him for strength or for speed.
But though Will was well mounted and rode very straight,
There were others who gained an advantage in weight.
So when fallows were 'holding' he slackened his speed,
And allowed the light horseman to give him a lead,
For the run showed a prospect of 'bellows to mend,'
And he liked to be 'somewhere about' at the end.
Forty minutes they'd galloped as straight as a die,
When a fast-flying stranger Will chanced to descry
On a low-lying 'skimmer,' a handsome young bay,
That seemed scarcely cut out in that country to 'stay,'
Who kept well to the front, and the wonder was how
With a horse of such build he could cover the plough.
But his place he maintained, and took freely each jump
In a way that seemed likely his courser to pump.
On they swept till they came at a neck-breaking pace
To a spot the hunt knew as a dangerous place;
'Twas a bush-hidden chalk-pit some forty feet deep,
Just the fence where a stranger might easily leap
From this world, with its troubles, and trials, and woes,
To the—well! where they land, I think, nobody knows.
But the hard-riding man on the low-lying bay
Seemed determined on solving the problem that day.
Though the lungs of our hero were healthy and strong,
And he holloaed his warnings both loudly and long,
Yet the stranger was deaf, or he paid him no heed,
But went straight for the pit with his nag at full speed.
There was no time for pausing; Will rallied the grey,
Till he forged right ahead of that bright little bay,



Beer.

I could feel their hot breaths on my face

'Then he 'wheeled' on Sir Hercules firm as a rock,
And bore down on the pair with a terrible shock.
'There was no standing up 'gainst that ponderous mass,
So the bay and his rider lay prone on the grass.

* * * * *

Now Lord Blazonford—that was the man on the bay—
Was compelled at Redhill for a fortnight to stay
Till his bruises were healed. But Will Dean to repay
For the service he did on the Saxendine day,
He both turned out the bailiffs and capital lent
To set Will on his legs, and at nothing per cent.
With great pleasure Will Dean still looks back on the day
When nothing would keep him from riding his grey.

CHASED BY WOLVES.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.



HE camp-fire was flickering and dancing, casting its light and shadow over a comfortable-looking tent, a hunter's waggon, and the recumbent figures of half-a-dozen men, who, in one of the peculiar silences that ever and anon steals over hard-worked sportsmen as, wearied with their day's exertions, they smoke the after-supper pipe, and lazily watch the wreaths dissolve themselves in the clear, star-lit air, allow their thoughts to drift vaguely to and fro.

They were a cosmopolitan gathering—three Americans, a Spaniard, a naturalised German, myself, and another Englishman—who had left civilisation for a few brief weeks to meet Nature face to face.

An almost perfect silence reigned, broken only by the occasional voice of a night bird, or the peculiarly plaintive half-howl, half-yelp, of the prairie wolf, lurking round the margin of light cast by the fire, for anything in the shape of supper that could be met with—all being fish that comes to the net of the old scavenger, from a piece of refuse bread to the licking-out of an emptied food can.

There is one right opposite to me now. I can see his lean, grey body, and detect his shame-faced, crawling, slinking gait, as he noses around the place. A sharp 'Hs-s-s!' sounds from

my right and attracts the brute's attention: up goes his head, and two shining eyes are seen, bright as an Argand burner: 'Crack!' and a rifle-shot has rolled him over, startling five of the dreamers out of their momentarily apathetic mood.

'That's the ninth this trip, Alec!' said one of the men. 'I cannot understand why you waste powder and ball upon them. How is it?'

'Because I hate the brutes!' rejoined Alec, a stalwart, broad-chested Canadian—'hate them like poison! It is, perhaps, paying these cowardly, sneaking pests a higher compliment than they deserve to couple them even in hatred with the wolf of Northern Europe, for it was there I contracted my dislike to them.'

The prospect of a new yarn roused every one, and in response to the general request, Alec gave us his experiences.

'Well, boys! some of you remember Ivan Turgoff, the Russian, who was staying at Quebec some twelve years ago. He was a right jolly fellow, as those who remember him will testify, with plenty of money and free withal, a good sportsman, and as good a friend as a man could wish to make. When he left us in the spring, he gave us, one and all, a general invitation to visit him, if we went to Europe; no matter where he was or what he was doing, he would somehow contrive to make things fit, so as to make us a return of the good times and sport he had enjoyed. Of course, we were sorry to lose him, and equally of course we accepted his invitation in the same cordial spirit in which it was given, feeling it to be more genuine than many such farewell invitations prove when tested. Few, if any of us, had at the time the remotest idea of a trip to Europe, and the event soon passed out of mind.

'A year or two elapsed, and we heard nothing of or from Ivan, and but for a few trophies of past sport which we had enjoyed together, and that adorned my walls, I had almost forgotten him.

'Four years after his departure, I was unexpectedly called on business to Europe, and when in Paris it suddenly occurred to me that I would try and discover his whereabouts. No sooner thought of than done. One telegram to his address in Moscow and another to his country estate, trusting to fortune that one or the other might find him. Next morning came a

reply from Moscow, summoning me to go right on at once, and saying he would meet every train until I arrived. The same evening saw me aboard the cars, and in due course turned out at the dépôt at Moscow.

‘Well, boys, I have met old friends times and again, but I never had such a greeting as Ivan’s. He wrung my hand until it ached, and looked into my face with the indescribable expression that says plainer and truer than words, “I’m glad to see you!”

‘We drove in a sleigh to his house, a great mansion, with grounds, gardens, stables, and all the surroundings of wealth and luxury. These Russians certainly know the meaning of comfort, much of which we here have yet to learn. After trotting me round the place and showing off all the lions, we went, a few days afterwards, to his country place for some shooting, and fine sport we had. There is no country on earth has such variety of game as Russia—bears, wolves, otters, lynxes, deer, partridges, grouse, snipe, &c., and, further north, seals, walrus, and musk-ox. By Jove! the very mention of the country makes my fingers itch to be handling the rifle there once more—and I will, too, if I live!

‘The estate was in Lithuania, and abounded with auroch, a variety of the bison tribe (which, in the Forest of Bialowicza, is exclusively preserved for the Czar), and we were fortunate in securing some very fine heads. The days passed very pleasantly, hunting in various parts one day one sort of game, next day another, our old friendship growing stronger and stronger every day. In the woods deer were somewhat scarce, numbers being killed every year by the wolves, who are as sagacious as human beings, and band themselves in packs, scouring the country for miles, chasing every living thing to the death, so of course we lost no chance of getting even with them.

‘One day Ivan and I had driven in the sleigh by ourselves some fifty miles into the very heart of the most solitary part of the estate, and on starting to return home were delayed by an accident to the sleigh, which had to be repaired; it was, therefore, late in the afternoon when we at last got away. The wind was bitterly cold, howling and moaning between the rising ground, sparsely covered with firs that lined either side of the route. We were well wrapped up, and with our three highly-bred horses running abreast went merrily along. By-and-by the moon rose, and cast a weird, uncanny light over the snow-

covered expanse that surrounded us. Ivan appeared to be pressing on his team, and spoke but little, but every now and again cast an anxious glance around.

‘In reply to my question what was the matter, he for some time evaded giving a direct reply, but at last he said, “Well, the truth is, we are out too late! This hard weather has made the wolves ravenous and reckless, and if we get home without a chase, fortune will favour us. So get out the three guns and the revolvers and load them, for we shall in all probability need them. Do you see that?”—pointing to a long, gaunt body, galloping like a piece of clockwork along the edge of the wood. “That is one, and in another five miles there will be a hundred more. They scent food like a vulture does carrion.”

‘Whilst he was speaking, I had drawn a bead on our neighbour, and with a yell he sprung in the air and fell on his back.

“‘We’ve done it now!” said Ivan. “That yell will bring them for a mile round!”

‘As he spoke, two wolves rushed out of the wood, and, as we whirled out of sight, were rending and tearing the body of their late comrade between them. We were eighteen miles or so from home, and the horses, having been carefully driven, were still in good form, and going at a great pace, trees and shrubs seeming to fly past us. All at once, a faint howl sounded in the rear—another, and yet another—one on the left, and then one on the right. Soon the cries came nearer, and then the pattering of feet was distinctly heard on the hard snow, as down the hillside came some twenty or more wolves.

“‘Now, old man! keep your head cool, and take the foremost wolf every time!”

‘I leant over the back of the sleigh, and Ivan, whirling the long, cruel whip round his head, for the first time applied it to the horses’ backs. They flew along like the wind, as if they knew that it was a case of life or death. The brutes gained upon us, and as they came within forty yards, I rolled the first two over, and in a second the remainder of the pack was all over them, fighting, as only famine could goad them to fight, for their shares of the still breathing bodies. Then they turned again and pursued us. Again and again was this manœuvre repeated, until my arms grew weary of loading and firing, and my eyes ached with the glare of the snow. Still the pack increased, and now was at least a hundred strong. Every



Onward we sped.
Every minute precious as gold.

shot seemed to have the effect of the dragon's teeth sown by Jason, and wolves appeared to spring out of the very ground.

'By Ivan's orders I tied a bottle to a long string, and let it trail in the snow behind the sleigh; that kept them at a distance for a time; but they then disregarded it, and came on as before, but now right up to the sleigh, until I could almost feel their hot breaths on my face as I fired point blank into "the brown of them."

'Suddenly Ivan turned, and said, "Give me a revolver, and don't fire until I give the word. My off-side horse is done, and will drop in less than a quarter of a mile." I handed him the weapon, and we waited until the pack crowded behind and at each side of us. To me it seemed one wide, yawning throat of red, surmounted by hundreds of hungry, bloodthirsty eyes. One great giant tried to leap in the sleigh, and Ivan shot him as he leapt. "Now, then!" he said, and the twelve shots rang out like a skirmishers' volley. Eight or nine wolves dropped, the sleigh was pulled up some fifty yards away, Ivan jumped out, and with one slash of his hunting-knife cut the traces of the horse and put a bullet through its head, then into the sleigh, and away again with whip and shout for dear life along the home stretch; onward we sped, every minute precious as gold. The muscles on Ivan's wrists were standing out like cords with the strain of wielding the heavy whip, and the horses were cut and bleeding from its fearful blows.

'Hark! Again there comes that fierce murmur on the breeze. They are after us again, and as we breast the brow of the slight hill, Ivan points to lights in front, and says, "Home! Fire a couple of shots to let them know we are here." A rifle shot is the answer; and, as we tear down the home stretch, thirty or forty men, with guns, pikes, &c., rush out to meet us, and only just in time, for as the pack, hungrily growling, rush up to within a few yards of the gates, and then turn, snarling, away from the volley that greets them, our horses give a long stagger, and down they both go, completely paced out. We got safely into the house, but for some days my finger was so galled with firing I could not use it, and Ivan's wrists were so strained and stiff he could not even dress himself.

'We soon after went to Moscow, and he came on to Paris, and stayed with me until I returned home. Now you know why the cry of a wolf sends a cold chill through me, and why I shall not forget that night in a hurry.'

So saying, Alec rose, shook himself, and throwing an armful of wood on the fire, turned in, we all following suit—I to dream of that vividly-described night drive in Russia, and to awake almost wishing I had experienced it.

AN ACCEPTED CHALLENGE.

By AMES SAVILE.

HOW many years ago is it, Bob?
A good many years before you can remember, that is to say before you were born, or even your father married, and that circumstance has something to do with the tale. He was the youngest of us and the pluckiest, and we had a trick of making his causes ours, whether small or great. It is nearly forty years ago now that Sir Robert Coleherne was hunting hounds in this country. They were rougher in the West country then than they are now; but though there was an absence of all smartness in the Barrascombe, and Sir Robert was his own field and kennel huntsman, his hounds were in good hard condition, and it wanted a pretty good man to stick close to them.

There was a Midland man down there that year; he was visiting at Barrascombe Park, and courting one of the master's fine-looking daughters. There was a certain amount of jealousy among us youngsters on account of it. We were all fond of Grace Coleherne, as well as of the rest of the Master's young ones, with whom we had been intimate as near neighbours in the country for some years. We were all inexperienced enough in the ways of the world, but formed our opinions with all the more certainty for that reason, and were by way of backing up our penniless cadet in his plunge for the beauty of the district. Good or bad matches were the unknown to us, and we imagined Grace on the eve of sacrifice to some thousands a year, against which we scaled your father's good looks and warm heart, weighing them out immeasurably the heavier. That was why we were all dead against the new comer, and inclined, which is not West-country fashion, to ride a trifle jealous with regard to him.

One day hounds found in Carlake, the bit of covert we drove past to-day just before we turned into the lane where you remarked upon the narrowness of the roadway and the height of the banks on either side. We were most of us in the long field that lies behind both, when the fox broke suddenly at the corner, and crossed the field, running straight for the lane, as it were behind us. We nearly all followed the Master, who rode back past the edge of the covert, swung round when he had got down into the hollow, and was with his hounds in no time. It looked like skirting or shirking, at least I suppose it must have done to the Shires man. He turned his horse, a grey I remember it was, put him into a steady gallop, and rode straight on the line of the hounds. They had scrambled through the shaggy hedge that topped the bank, squirmed down it, and were up on the other side and after him before I had taken in what Barrowby was doing. He was riding a horse as strange to the country as himself to a smashing fall. I galloped after him, so fast that I had only just space to prevent my horse from plunging down into the lane in front of him as a too practical warning. But I was not half fond enough of the man for that, and when by the shave of a cannon I had made his horse swerve out of his stride and spoiled his fly, and he pulled up and swore at me, I had done all I wanted.

‘Good Heavens, sir!’ I shouted, ‘don’t abuse me like a pickpocket; I have saved your life and your horse’s, and lost my place with the hounds. That lane is twenty feet deep.’

‘Oh!’ he said, quite coolly, and with a sneer; ‘down here you hunt a country you have not courage to cross!’

I was young then, Bob, and youth is a dish of folly with bounce as a seasoning. ‘Not courage to cross?’ I retorted. ‘Wait till hounds take this line again, and then I’ll give you a lead no horse of yours can follow!’

I was thinking of a clever pony we had in our stables; he was Exmoor-bred, and like a cat for sliding down and crawling up queer places. He might, I believe, have got down that perpendicular bank in safety, but not up again on the other side with a rider on his back, and only the heat of anger could have made it seem possible. That was what I had in my eye, however, and when my gentleman turned away and left me to follow sullenly and nick in with hounds as best I might, I swore I’d do what I had said. His parting words too, ‘You’ll find me ready,’ kept my blood up, and Carlake, with another neighbour-

ing covert invariably holding foxes, gave the chance of the line recurring again more than once during the coming season. We were then in November. However, the more I thought of it the less I liked it, and the fact of losing the run did not improve my temper nor colour the prospect more rosily.

A curious chance happened to me soon after. At Barrascombe Fair I picked up what proved to be a flyer, from a gipsy fellow, half-dealer, half rough-rider, who frequented the part of the country. It was a big, up-standing, well-bred hunter-looking horse, a bright bay with a blaze and stockings, that Tim Farr was leading about in search of a customer when he lighted upon me. I had not much knowledge of horses beyond what one instinctively picks up by being always amongst or on the top of them, but I saw he had a fine shoulder and big joints, though he was a trifle cow-hocked, and that he looked like having pace. His youth was unmistakable, and so was his temper, for he glared right and left as he was being moved about, his ears were laid flat, and there was a threatening swing about his tail that kept spectators at a distance. When Tim offered him to me for fifteen pounds, however, I was staggered, but when he said that he had given still less for him to a man he named, who had sworn to shoot him, but had softened at the sight of a greasy ten-pound note pulled out from the pocket of Tim's ragged trousers, and added that he himself would not keep him at his 'place' a day longer than he could help it, for the horse must soon be a dead loss to him, I understood it better. Tim's honesty was exactly measured by his policy; he was of use to my father, who had been a good customer to him, and I knew that to any of us he would tell the truth about a horse. Fifteen pounds I could raise, and something might, I sanguinely thought, be made even of a brute at four years old. It was 'a young man's horse,' you will understand; but I was a young man, and I rode home highly pleased with the prospect of a second mount through the season.

My father said little when I showed him my purchase, and it did not seem to strike him as the bargain I had taken it to be. He did not, however, pull the horse to pieces, but merely said, when I praised his easy, lengthy stride, 'How long do you expect him to keep it up with that deficiency of barrel?'

'Blood gives stay,' I hazarded. 'Tim says he is thoroughbred.'

'Very nearly, I daresay,' returned my father, with another

look at the horse ; ' with that fine coat and those little ears you will have all the women's suffrages at a lawn meet.'

He said no more, and a week after I had the horse out for the first time with hounds.

We found at Sandypool, and followed a straight-necked fox over the edge of the Downs, and towards this side of the country. It looked like a point for Hextry, but whether or not he hoped for an open earth in Carlake—one would think no fox in the Barrascombe country would be sanguine on that head—or whether he made for the covert with a notion of a ring round it and a check to scent amongst its dead leaves, our quarry unexpectedly turned down wind and set his mask for the little wood, heading for the lane exactly where the fresh fox had crossed it, the other way on, three weeks previously. I have never seen the line taken from Sandypool before or since. The bay had given me some trouble on the way to covert, but when hounds found he beat me. He became like a mad horse, tearing at his bit, and when checked was alternately up on his haunches or boring his head down between his fore-legs. I managed to get clear of the field, and as hounds were running to a strong scent I sat still and let him go. I had a good seat—I may say it now—and fair hands, but what coolness of head I may now possess I owe to age and experience. However, I managed to lie a little to the left of hounds, and for a mile and a half nothing could touch us. I rode straight, blessing every obstacle that we met, and he took everything in his stride without seeming to notice it. Within half a mile of Carlake, the bulk of the field, who had taken it easier on a lower level, began to close up to us, then, as I told you, the fox seemed to change his point, and I found myself, in good company, swinging with the pack.

The obvious riding line was to the right of hounds, but just then they broke into view, and with a burst of music that would have roused the veriest slug, they breasted the little hill and streamed straight as a die across the pasture that was only divided from Carlake Field by the sunken lane. The vigour of hounds gave a fresh spurt to my horse. I tried to pull him off their sterns, but he was past steering, and we flew along until we were within ten yards of the lane. Then, with a plunge for life, I drove my spurs in and sat back. I never for one moment expected to get over clear, and I knew the stiff, tangled thorn hedge opposite would be fatal to any but the cleanest jump. For part of one second, with the yawning gulf beneath me, I realised the mean-

ing of having one's heart in one's mouth ; then we landed easily on the springy turf with a half-length of it between us and the hedge, and in a few strides were into Carlake wood.

Almost before we reached it, above the surging of blood in my heated brain, I heard the sound of a crash behind me. Barrowby had seen me hold on to the line as the hounds faced the hill, and as he saw what that line must cross, he recalled the heedless challenge. His head was as cool as mine was hot, but he was a man of strong will. He was well, even brilliantly, mounted, but I conceived he hardly realised what he was riding for, and certainly was unaware of the fact that I took the jump against my own intention. By the time his object was understood it was too late to stop him, but two or three men whose position enabled them to see him, checked their horses instinctively and watched the result in painful suspense. Barrowby had steadied his horse on the crest of the hill, then he let him out and drove him at the lane. He was a bold horse, but the country was still a little blind, and he jumped in ignorance of what was required of him. He rose high, and a second horseman, who was nearest to the point, saw him give the second spring in the air that is the desperate resource of a clever fencer. That was all, and the next moment he had charged the opposite bank with a force that broke his neck, and had fallen back upon his rider, whom he crushed beneath him. Barrowby never moved again.

* * * * *

That was my last sensation jump, Bob, and however involuntarily undertaken, the consequence was severe enough to give me a lesson against jealous riding that never lost its sharpness. As to its size I could not pretend to be accurate. The jump was not measured at the time, and later on some alteration was made in the fencing at the very spot. It certainly was a big thing, and people used to go and look at the place long after the tragic interest that attached to it from Barrowby's death had faded. The width of the roadway I knew to be ten feet, and I should put the ground we covered at about four-and-thirty. I suspect, however, bigger things have been done over water ; it was the situation that magnified the feat. As to the horse, that day told me what he was worth, and when I got an offer of seventy guineas for him, on the strength of the fly, from a Lancer in Carminster Barracks, who wanted him as a venture for military steeplechases, I took it readily. His form and pace

were good, but he could not stay—you don't often find a bad-tempered one who will—nothing was too big for him, and he was fancied, especially by subalterns, the two or three times he started ; but half any course was mostly enough for him, and he would neither feed nor furnish. I imagined, though he was in low condition, that he showed at his best that day in the scurry with the Barrascombe.

A LIVE DOG AND A DEAD LION.

A SOUTH AFRICAN ADVENTURE.

By J. R. ROBERTS.



OLDEN South Africa! The land, *par excellence*, of precious metals, gems rich and rare, and big game shooting. Sunny South Africa, as a brilliant pen has styled it ; Brightest South Africa—as Sir John Willoughby has felicitously named it—has of late been brought so prominently before the notice of the British public, that no geographical leading up, no paragraphs preliminary, will be necessary to introduce readers to Matabililand and the glorious upland regions beyond—to that vast tract, now known as Rhodesia, recently added as one more very large and lustrous jewel to the crown of our Queen and Empress, by the Right Hon. Cecil Rhodes.

The scene, then, of this story is laid above and beyond Fort Salisbury, in Mashonaland, well nigh 2000 miles north-east of the lovely and salubrious vicinity of the Cape of Good Hope. The time, anterior to the 'smashing' of the Matabili.

Upon the banks of one of the many tributaries of the mighty Zambesi river, in the dominions of Lo Bengula, imagine our camp, amidst scenery of the grandest type, but mingled with it loveliest, fairy-like glens and oases, of ravishing beauty. Wood and water (the two things most prized by African travellers) abounded. In every valley ripples a stream of pale blue water, from which bed the ground gently rises, covered with most luxuriant grass ; lordly trees rise up, and from out the spaces between Titanic rocks the graceful and brilliant foliage tones down their otherwise desolate grandeur to an aspect of enchanting loveliness. Though we are some 5000 feet above the sea-

level, stern and lofty mountains stand around, whilst scattered ranges of rolling hills appear like smaller links in a great and twisted mountainous chain. Besides the forest trees are lovely woodland thickets. In such a land of vale and stream and hill and bosage roam, wild and free, such great hordes of well nigh innumerable varieties of game—such troops of buffalo, deer, zebra, and other interesting or graceful creatures—that one is afraid to deal with figures, or attempt to give an idea of the numbers of *feræ naturæ* frequently encountered in one herd. As for the varieties, no better list could be compiled than that of Pringle's, in his stirring and well-known poem, 'Afar in the Desert.' Thus :—

'Afar in the desert I love to ride,
 With the silent bush-boy alone by my side ;
 Away, away, from the dwellings of men,
 By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen ;
 By valleys remote where the oribi plays,
 Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hartebeest graze,
 And the kùdù and eland unhunted recline,
 By the skirts of grey forests o'erhung with wild vine ;
 Where the elephant browses in peace at his wood,
 And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood ;
 And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
 In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.'

And the poet goes on to describe how upon the broad breast of the brown and parched karoo (or desert) wander springbok, quagga, zebra, ostrich, and tells of snakes and lizards, of bitter melon, salt lake, and a total lack of herbage save poisonous thorn. But in the rich and fruitful land of many waters—in Zambesia—where we were, the very antithesis of the karoo was ours. Oribi, mentioned by the poet-sportsman, is the Hottentot name for antelope, a little creature resembling the steinbok. This graceful creature is becoming very scarce in the more accessible parts of South Africa, and is protected in the colony of Natal. To the copious list given by the author of 'Afar in the Desert,' must be added the following :—Wilde paauw (Kori bustard), guinea-fowl, partridges, the Cape pheasant—a species of game bird, partaking alike of the characteristics of our grouse at home and the Namaqua partridge of South Africa—feathered to the toes ; the green monkey of the forest (Kafir, *imkao*), the klipspringer, the bontebok, the boschbok, and bush pig.

But to continue the story. Immediately after daybreak, one

morning, we descended into a 'donga' (a ravine—the dry bed of a river). The boys found plenty of spoor (or slot, as they would say in Devon). The bottom of the donga was about fifteen feet below the level of the veldt, and about forty yards wide. In parts where the scour of winter rains had been great, the walls were bare and perpendicular. In other places were luxurious growths of the graceful mimosa and tall tambuki grass. Here we killed a lion, so easily and with so little incident, that the recital of the slaughter demands no further detail. But this lion has a history. When skinning him, the boys recognised him as a recent nightly visitor. The night before he had collared one of our trek oxen. The lion had attacked the ox in the rear, fastening his tremendous claws in the poor creature's side, one piercing right through to the intestines. He had then bitten him in the flank, and to show the prodigious power of the monster's jaws, the thigh-joint was dislocated, the hide broken, and one of the largest sinews snapped. Having thus disabled his victim, he had apparently seized him by the throat and throttled him. We followed the trail in the morning, by spoor, and at last in a glen encountered our foe, lying in a tangle of rushes and long dead grass, and bagged him as aforesaid.

Here permit me to pass the *dramatis personæ* in review before the reader. The party consisted of Guy Beaumish, from the military camp at Wynberg; Jack Freeleigh, a naval man, from Simon's Bay; Philip Morrison, of Her Majesty's Customs, Cape Town (all neighbours and friends), and I, Roland Lorimer, assistant-magistrate at Keiskamma-Hoek, in the eastern part of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope—situated far distant from the trio of Cape chums. In addition to the 'General,' the 'Admiral,' the 'Collector,' and 'his Worship' (to give the party the sobriquets by which we always addressed each other) were sundry Kafirs—servants, cooks, gun and game carriers, hewers of wood and drawers of water—a kindly, happy, faithful, valiant band of natives, of whom the leading men were: Zazini (the Chief), Xinti, Amanzi, Ambrachaval, and Sicliko. Last, but not least in importance, was Prince, a large white bull-terrier, the property and joy and delight of Captain Guy Beaumish. Now, the General's dog was worthy of the somewhat sentimental love lavished upon him by his master. What could he not do? What had he not done? What reminiscences did not his presence call up? Down in pleasant Devon (for the General was a west-countryman), he had bolted foxes, drawn badgers, assisted in the

terraqueous joys of 'ottering,' vanquished pole-cats, scurried rabbits from moorland brakes on sunny autumn afternoons, and had been generally death on vermin and other creatures; a right amiable, gentle, lovely animal, but bellicose passing belief. Not rats alone (in countless hordes), not even the harmless necessary cat, times out of number, but sheep had he slain, greatly to the financial loss of his fond master. Indeed, he would kill—or at least 'go for'—any four-legged creature wherein was the breath of life. Another thing endeared him to the General. He had been instrumental in saving his master's life, by summoning aid when our soldier was being carried out to sea by the undertow, whilst bathing in False Bay; moreover—and in particular—he had been once the much befondled pet of one of those dead dear women of whom most men cherish memories, sad, yet pleasing; forgotten during periods of gaiety and excitement, but remembered in the night watches, and in the solitude of isolation and retirement.

As the General used to say: 'That dog's as good as a novel or a play, better than a diary. I have only to look at him for a few moments, then close my eyes, and live again the happiest two years of my life; such sport, such jolly times, such golden days—never, alas! to return—as fall to the lot of very few men indeed.'

What wonder then that the dog Prince was as the apple of his master's eye, the darling of his heart; more precious than the diamond mines at Kimberley, or all the gold upon the Witwatersrand and Mashonaland fields combined?

How these four excellent servants of her Majesty managed to leave their important duties; how they came to be encamped upon lofty uplands, far in the land of the Matabili, with guns and rifles and revolvers, stores, munitions, tents, wagons, horses, oxen, and accoutrements of various kinds, attended by a band of Kafir servants, and how the dog Prince journeyed thither in company, are details not material to the unfolding of this story, which must now proceed 'right away.'

Surfeited with the slaughter of small and comparatively defenceless animals, including all species of bird, beast, and buck, the General (far away the best shot and keenest sportsman of the party) burned with desire to kill more lions. The boys went out and reported them plentiful in the vicinity, being guided by the spoor. Accordingly, the next morning early, he sallied forth, accompanied by Amanzi and Sicliko. After he had ridden some

distance through successive glades of by no means dense forest, he caught sight of a glittering eye in the midst of some bush. It was a lion. He was watching the horseman intently. His hind legs were doubled in under him, and his huge head was pressed flat upon his fore paws, just as a mastiff, or indeed any other dog, will often watchfully lie. He was distant some thirty or forty paces, and the General had a pretty clear view of him. He raised his rifle and aimed at the lion, who thereupon shifted his position, though he still stared stolidly with his yellow eye; which would not have been a bad mark, save that the shot might have caught the animal too high; in which case the bullet would have merely glanced from his skull. The lion looked the personification of massive strength and dauntless valour. Nothing stirred but his tail, the end of which he twitched slowly, so that the black bunch of hair at its extremity appeared first on one side of him and then on the other. Presently, getting a fair chance at him, the General fired, aiming low between his eyes. With a fearful roar, the lion responded, charging straight at the horse and man. Amanzi and Sicliko, brave fellows, as are all their race, adroitly shinned up trees, to await further developments. The General, with a turn of the wrist, quickly got his horse behind a rock, and galloped away in a circuit, presently returning to the vicinity of the lion from that animal's rear. Again he saw the noble beast couchant, and bleeding profusely. Before another spring could be made, he got in a second shot, this time stretching out the lion helpless and moribund, but not quite dead. He re-loaded both barrels; the Kafirs came down from their perches; and a third shot, and the thrust of two cruelly-pointed assegais (delivered with care so as not to injure the skin, but merely to give the *coup-de-grace*), and the General bagged his first lion.

Every night we fortified the camp. We had not nearly sufficient wagons wherewith to form the orthodox laager, but we environed ourselves with the few wagons we had together, with an interlaced fence of thorn and many fires, for the lions were simply *awful*. We had come out mainly to shoot lions, 'tis true; but that one may have too much of a good thing is proverbial. It is one thing to go out and stalk a lion when you feel so disposed; quite another to be beleaguered by a roaring, hungry, desperate troupe of the creatures. They would often leap into our camp and carry away the carcase of a buck and other game we had hanging up, failing which, they killed the bullocks.

Prince, who regarded lions as an enlarged (and therefore more sport-giving) breed of cats, and who never failed to take one by the throat and worry him, after being shot dead by our rifles, had to be fastened up in a tent, otherwise he would, without doubt, have been carried off as an exceedingly choice and toothsome tit-bit. One night, after a right bloody, enjoyable, and hard day with buck (many species), ending with some pleasing trifling with partridges, the fires being lighted and the watch set, three of the friends were soundly sleeping, the fourth—the Collector—being in charge of the boys who were supposed to be on the alert. Dreadful roars came from all sides of the camp, re-echoing from kopje and wooded height, and from lofty mountain crags beyond, whilst in the moonlight, lions could be seen prowling round and fiercely regarding the fires and the live and dead stock within. Towards two o'clock in the morning, and just as he was thinking of waking his relief, the Collector observed a huge male lion. Colossal and fearsome he looked in the misty air, with occasional gleams of moonlight. He stood high upon a solitary rock—a curious pinnacle—some fifty yards from the camp. He roused us, and we all turned out. We recognised the great beast as one that had recently carried away our last sheep, one that more than once had got off with a badly directed bullet in his body, as a great scarred gash, or seam, on his near flank testified. Ambrachaval—a very superstitious person—pronounced the lion supernatural, and therefore invulnerable; but we did not accept this theory, and doubted not that a well-toughened bullet, propelled with the requisite number of drams of powder, and placed in the right spot, would do for this demon lion. Indeed, we lusted for the blood of the royal creature. The white sportsmen all hurriedly turned out, armed; our design was to give King Leo a royal salute from four rifles simultaneously. 'Not very sportsmanlike,' you say? Well, perhaps not strictly in accordance with the ordinarily accepted canons. But you see our store of flesh was valuable to us, our bullocks invaluable, lions as common as fleas, and this particular one a regular terror and arch-marauder. The plan of the campaign was well designed, the coming off of the same according to expectation. The lion stood on the rock, face towards us, in bold relief, with the moon behind him, low in the west. But just as we fired, before the crash rang out, he smelt danger, and, moving, was about to descend at the very moment that flame burst from the muzzles of our rifles. The simultaneous crack of

the four weapons was instantly followed by a terrific roar from the lion, mingled with a series of fierce growls from Prince (he never barked). Horror! Just as the rifles were pointed, unobserved by the preoccupied sportsmen, the dog bounced out of the tent, took in the situation at a glance, and flew to the rock and the lion upon it.

All in an instant of time we heard the pealing crash of the rifles, the fierce and agonised roar of the lion, and the sinister growls of Prince; saw dog and lion roll off the rock together, falling behind it; then the moon passed behind a cloud, setting shortly afterwards, and all was as still as death, and so dark that no one cared to pass outside our belt of fires, which only served to intensify the surrounding blackness.

The General was in a semi-frantic state of mind about his dog; cursing the lion heartily and audibly. The best he hoped for was that in the fusillade Prince had been shot dead; for knowing that warrior's temperament so well, he was quite assured that he would collar the lion, be that kingly creature alive or dead, wounded or unhurt, 'as sure as eggs is eggs.' And there was considerable probability that the lion was far from being killed, and the result of the encounter between the two heroes was obvious to any one having the faintest idea of a lion's immense strength and courage. A mere pat with one of those huge paws, the least scratch from one of those formidable claws, and poor gallant Prince will be crushed, torn, and mangled beyond recognition in a moment of time.

The moon remained overcast, and presently set. In any case it would have been madness for us to have left the camp with those hordes of wild beasts prowling around. Morning dawned at last, and then we four white men, together with Zazini and all the boys, save the cook, hurried out to the kopje, behind which we found lying the lion, dead and cold, and Prince, with his teeth fast locked in the throat of the huge beast, with a look in his eyes that evinced his firm determination to spend the rest of his days so occupied. After all, we had luckily killed our lion dead; a bullet fired by Beaumish having done the business, as we knew by the size, he having, in the hurry, snatched up his elephant rifle. As for Prince, truly a miraculous escape was his. By great good fortune, his rashness had not resulted in a horrible death. Wonderful to relate, his master's bullet, lodged comfortably in the lion's brain, had, in its flight, carried away the dog's left ear; the which painful dis-

figurement not appearing to cause him the slightest inconvenience or concern. Guy was so delighted to find his pet alive that he made little trouble over the lost ear. After, with difficulty, choking off his dog, he carried him to his tent. There he washed and doctored the wound with great skill and tenderness, muttering the while, 'A live dog is better than a dead lion any day.' And so said all of us.

THE GIRL HE LEFT BEHIND HIM.

A HUNTING-FIELD COMEDIETTA.

By 'TIM WHIFFLER.'

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DICKY COBB, *a highly respectable young man, well off, and as shy as they make 'em (in love with Miss Babbage).*

REGINALD RUNNYMEADE, *an impecunious and very fast young man (in love with Miss Babbage's money).*

MISS BABBAGE, *a rich heiress (in love with Reginald Runnymede).*

SCENE.—*A Ride in Tangleton Forest. (Hounds are supposed to be drawing for a fox.)*

TIME.—*The Afternoon.*

Enter MISS BABBAGE, in a brown study, a brown habit, and on a brown hunter. She pulls up and soliloquises.

MISS BABBAGE. I really think my adored Reginald has made up his mind at last. There was a wistful look in those dear bloodshot eyes of his just now, when I accepted a sandwich from Mr. Cobb's box that there was no mistaking. It seemed to say, 'Oh, why didn't you ask *me* for some, instead of that great gaby?' And Dicky Cobb *is* a gaby if ever there was one. He follows me about literally like my shadow, and I wish he wouldn't. 'Oh, Reggy, Reggy, if you would only offer me some Love—ever so little—I could do without the sandwiches, no matter how hungry I was.' My heart somehow told me that you only wanted a chance given you to declare yourself, and here it is. I have given my groom the slip, and wandered away



"The Girl he left behind him"

July 1883

from the madding crowd on purpose. If you don't know how to spell 'opportunity' now, it is not your Julia's fault. But, hark! I hear some one approaching. [*She looks behind her.*] Yes, it *is* he; but how slowly—all too slowly! I will move on a little, and then, perhaps, he will hurry—'put the steam on a little,' as he would say. [*Exit round the corner.*]

Enter REGINALD RUNNYMEADE, elaborately got up in hunting costume, and mounted on a chestnut mare.

REGINALD RUNNYMEADE. So it's come to this at last, has it? The two B's—Babbage or Bankruptcy! and 'pon my soul I don't know which is the hardest nut to crack of the two. If the lady was only half as good looking and well bred as you, old gal [*patting the chestnut mare on the neck*], why, I shouldn't care, but she *ain't*, dontcherknow—and, Lord! what a gusher! So fat, too; and I can't abide 'em fat, neither hosses, dawgs, nor women. Well [*sighing*], there's one consolation; money makes up for a good many deficiencies, and so it will have to do in this case. One more swig at the curaçoa and brandy, and then here's at you, Julia, my beauty.

[*Withdraws his hunting flask from the holster, takes a long pull therefrom, and, murmuring, 'Curse that Baccarat!' rides on in search of Miss Babbage.*]

Re-enter MISS BABBAGE and REGINALD RUNNYMEADE.

MISS B. And you are really going to sell that pretty creature, Mr. Runnymede. Oh, how can you have the heart to, you cruel man? [*shaking a finger playfully at him*].

R. R. [*aside*]. Silly old gusher! [*Aloud*] Yes, she and my other nags all go up to Tattersalls' in a fortnight's time, worse luck! You see [*apologetically*], we have not all of us the good fortune to possess a purse as deep as that of the rich Miss Babbage.

MISS B. I think I could tell you, Mr. Runnymede, how *you* might be quite as rich as Miss Babbage—if you only cared to take the trouble, that is.

R. R. No trouble, I assure you. [*Aside*] I'm in for it now, and no mistake. [*Aloud*] Give your orders, gents—I mean, Miss Babbage—and I'll act up to 'em to the letter, I do assure you.

MISS B. [*simpering*]. Oh, dear me, how foolish I am! I—I really hardly like to. No, I don't think I can, really. I don't

know what you will think of me, Reggy—Mr. Runnymede, I mean—if I do. Tell me, will you promise not to be shocked?

R. R. Promise? Rather! Lor' bless you, Miss Babbage, nothing shocks me, especially when a young and lovely woman like yourself is concerned. So do look sharp, for I fancied I heard a whimper in the distance not a second ago.

MISS B. Oh, but, Mr. Runnymede, I ——

R. R. Too late, by Jove! They've found and are away, as sure as a gun, whilst we've been fooling here. You'll have to let me into the secret later on. Come along, Miss Babbage. If the fox makes for the Vale, we're in for a stinger.

[Gallops off as hard as he can go, Miss B. following after, until brought up by a large tree which has fallen across the ride. She pulls up and bursts into tears.]

MISS B. You *unkind, heartless, unfeeling* wretch! I won't tell you now—I declare I won't! How stupid of me to waste so much time! Had we been pledged to one another I could then have *ordered* him to stay by my side. And now—well, he shall never have the chance again. But what am I to do now? Where is my groom?—where is everybody? I can't hear a sound! Oh, it is getting dark too, and here I am lost in this dreary forest! Oh, what shall I do? what *shall* I do? Oh, if only Mr. Cobb were here—Mr. Cobb who Reggy is always sneering and laughing at. *He* would not have left me, I know.

[Dicky Cobb suddenly appears round the corner.]

DICKY C. Good gracious, my dear Miss Babbage! why, what is the matter? Why these tears?

MISS B. Oh, Mr. Cobb, I am so pleased you've come. *[Sob.]* That horrid Mr.—Mr. Runnymede ——

DICKY C. *[eagerly]*. Yes; what about him? What's he done?

MISS B. Oh, how I hate him!

DICKY C. So do I. But what has he done?—*do* tell me.

MISS B. Fi-i-i-rst, he in-in-in-sulted me, and then galloped off and left me to—to di-ie in the Forest.

DICKY C. *[gathering up his whip]*. The *brute*! he richly deserves horsewhipping! *[Fiercely]* Many a man has been called out and left quivering on a daisy for less than that, Miss Babbage!

MISS B. Oh, that I were married! that I had a husband to punish him!

DICKY C. *[aside]*. Now's your chance, my boy, and don't neglect it. *[Ahem.]* Married—husband did you say, dear Miss

Babbage? [*Insinuatingly*] I s'pose poor little me wouldn't do, eh?

MISS B. My preserver! my proved friend! how can I refuse you? No, I have not the heart, even if I would.

[*Throws herself into his arms, nearly knocking Dicky Cobb out of his saddle in so doing.*

DICKY C. That's all right. [*Aside*] Thank goodness! [*Aloud*] And now for a drop of sherry to restore your shattered nerves, and then make a start for home—eh, Julia—for it's getting dark and we're not out of the wood yet, recollect.

MISS B. [*lovingly.*] Yes, dearest, anything you wish; and, Dicky —

DICKY C. My heart's pride!

MISS B. I hope you won't lose a moment in telling that rude, unmanly fellow, Mr. Reginald Runnymede—with my compliments—Julia Babbage's compliments, if you like—that you are engaged to 'The Girl He Left Behind Him.'

[*Dicky promises. Having administered some sherry to his fiancée and partaken of some himself, with a kiss to follow, the pair set their gee-gees in motion and plunge into the fastnesses of the Forest.*

CURTAIN.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



STORY of war, love, and sport, by George F. Underhill and Herbert S. Sweetland, nicely illustrated by L. Thackeray, will doubtless please military men and sportsmen. The title of the book is *Through a Field-glass*, and the collaborators concern themselves chiefly with the doings of an imaginary regiment of Lancers. The tale is well written, and the various incidents are treated dramatically and with considerable force and crispness. A *dénouement* occurs at the close of most of the chapters, which is so far an advantage that it gives the opportunity for a pause when the last cigar is finished. Chapman & Hall are the publishers.

So far as any book can teach one how to play a game of

skill, few, if any, are more likely to do so than *Hints on Billiards*, by J. P. Buchanan. (George Bell & Sons.) It is not only illustrated with thirty-six diagrams, which of themselves make the elements of the game clear, but the whole book is so lucidly written that the tyro will probably rise from its perusal with the conviction that billiards *must be a very easy game* to play.

Polo, by the late J. Moray Brown, will interest the ever-increasing number of enthusiasts of this popular sport, and, from a practical point of view, no one is better qualified to discourse on this topic than the genial author and all-round sportsman who has so recently passed from our midst, and whose entertaining articles on 'Sport in India,' under the *nom de plume* of 'Dooker,' are well known to the readers of this magazine. Every page in this hand-book is instructive and interesting. The chapter on 'Strategy Tactics and Danger in Polo' will bear reading again and again, but the 'Letters to Young Polo-players' should be learnt by heart. The illustrations are capitally drawn by Cuthbert Bradley, and the publishers are Vinton & Co.



STANDARD

MR. JOHN. NATSON.

MR. A. E. PEAT.

MR. R. & M. L. O'NEAL.

CAPTAIN. J. SNEED. JAMES PEAT.

MR. A. E. PEAT.

CAPTAIN. BADINGTON.


CAPTAIN. JONES.

Sussex County v Freehooers.

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

THE MESSRS. PEAT AND POLO.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

ROBABLY there is no more representative gathering of the leaders of sport than that which assembles at Tattersalls on the Monday before the Derby. Year after year the Monday sale at Albert Gate is made the occasion for the gathering of the clans, and is one of the surest places to meet a fellow-sportsman during the lethargy of summer that we know of. The establishment has stood pre-eminently conspicuous in the sporting world during some seventy or eighty years, in spite of opposition and the springing up of newer institutions. But to-day Tattersalls gives a tone to the sporting world in the same way that the transactions on the Royal Exchange influence the mercantile part of society, and the name is known and respected all over the civilised globe. The yard offers one of the most agreeable lounges in London, even supposing no direct purpose call us thither, and as a spot affording an opportunity to study character has no equal. The catalogue in Derby week always contains the names of those who send up a stud annually, until their doing so has well-nigh grown into a recognised institution. We wonder how many years Mr. James Hornsby has sent up a stud of hackneys and hunters? It would hardly seem like Derby week if he discontinued to do so. It is a difficult matter to decide which class of horses makes the most money when the demand appears to be for the best of everything. The lead-off was made by Mr. T. B. John, of Cardiff, so well known to show-yard fame, with a stud of six hackneys and show horses, all of which reached three-

figures. The well-known performer, Lord Windsor, a bay gelding that we have seen showing in single, double, and tandem harness, was knocked down for 500 guineas, whilst Lord Bute, another bay gelding, and winner of over one hundred first and champion prizes, fetched 1030 guineas. Sir Walter Gilbey also had a large stud of harness horses, which went for satisfactory prices, five running into three figures. A stud of seven hunters, sent up by Captain H. C. Dugdale, 16th Lancers, averaged 213 guineas apiece. Besides these were hunters and hunt-servants' horses from the Surrey Union, Captain Spicer's, and the Ledbury Hunts, and private studs, which all fetched fair value. But the event of the day came when the polo ponies trotted up to the rostrum, and lovers of the royal game nodded to such a tune that the highest prices on record were reached. The occasion of the sale of the Messrs. Peats' ponies had been anticipated as an event in the history of polo, and the retirement of the three brothers from the game they love so well leaves a blank which will not be easily filled. During a period of some twenty years (for the Brothers Peat came to the front in 1879), they held the supremacy, and came off victorious in so many a hard-fought fight that their names became household words among those who delight to chase the flying ball. To pen the memories of a long succession of triumphs during the career of the invincible trio would well-nigh be to conjure up all the best-known players and write the history of polo. In that time polo has developed from the slow dribbling game on small ponies to the scientific galloping game of to-day.

It would be difficult to overrate the service the Messrs. Peat have rendered to polo, and by excellence established a school of play generally adopted by the rising generation. They were keen players, and whether in a match or practising never fell into the mistake of being slack and careless, so bad for man or pony. But, alas! *tempus fugit*; the end must come to every journey; Old Time bowls all of us out before we hardly realise our innings have begun. The last game must be played, no matter what it may be, and the old adage is forcibly true that 'those whom the gods love die young.' Very few people know the exact moment when to leave off, for it requires much moral courage to recognise the fact that when the zenith is reached a retrograde movement must of necessity set in. Though the hand of Time may deal gently with us, our ardour for the sport may be as keen as ever, with hand and eye in unison; still, there

are moments when we must recognise the fact that we are on the top rung of the ladder of fame, and must of necessity begin to make the descent. The game of life is a rough and bumping journey; we overstay our welcome, and Old Time gallops us off the scene; the proud position we held so easily is no longer ours, and new aspirants take our place. We may, if we will, remain, and be content with a second or third-rate position; but the rising generation have the legs of us, and leave us in the rear. With proppy action and shortened stride, we try for a time to disguise the fact, and explain it away by thinking it is nothing more than a run-away game, too fast to last. But no! those in front do not come back to us; we are in the way—merely passengers on the journey.

‘When long years have passed away,
And the summer of life be o’er;
When the joyous days of youth and strength
Have gone to return no more;
Yet memory often shall cheer the heart,
And brighten the flickering flame,
And side by side—as of old—we’ll ride,
And join in the glorious game!’

So sang Mr. H. Cumberland Bentley, the poet laureate of polo in these pages, and surely enough he depicts the game as truly as he does human nature.

The Brothers Peat retired at a moment when they were in their zenith of fame, sweeping everything before them, achieving fresh laurels every year, with no sign of being supplanted. Little was it to be wondered, therefore, that by their retirement at such a moment they leave a blank in the polo world that will not be easily filled, and the regret is universal that we have seen them play for the last time, leaving the polo field, as they do, with a well-nigh unbeaten record, in the prime of vigour and manhood. Such leaves-taking sets the mind thinking what constitutes the royal road to success, because many a brilliant young player has ere now appeared on the scene, giving every promise of supplying a new star in the polo firmament, to as quickly snuff out or ever it was discovered.

But the Messrs. Peat simply held their foremost position by hard training and constant practice. I may be accused of riding my hobby to death, but it is a fine thing this self-imposed temperance in most cases, and the muzzle is the greatest guarantee of success in all games. Long and light in build,

with not an ounce of superfluous flesh, the three brothers were moulded for the saddle, and nature had given them the true eye, the light hand, and workmanlike seat that made them masters of the situation. Out and about at the grey streak of dawn, when most of us would be contented to leave the exercise of our stud to the charge of grooms and helpers, the trio might have been seen patiently practising young ponies on Wimbledon Common, or perfecting strokes from the backs of old ones. Then, when the bell rang at four o'clock in the afternoon on Hurlingham's fair lawn, the brothers, fit as fighting-cocks—for they lived to play polo—cantered into the arena, on the best of terms with themselves and their ponies. Their system of training ponies to the game was half the secret of their success, for, be it hunter or polo pony, an animal never carries you so well as when broken to your hand, and the Messrs. Peat made all their own ponies. That good judge, Stoneclink, on whose shoulders has fallen the mantle of Dooker, when commenting on the enormous prices made by these ponies at the sale, said, 'In this case men were anxious to buy not only the make and shape of a well-chosen stud, but to get the rare training which, as is well known, the Messrs. Peat gave their ponies. The ordinary player is generally in a hurry with his training, and he often spoils, and almost always takes from the possible perfection of the new pony. The ponies of the Messrs. Peat were good, and one or two even of rare excellence, but animals no worse are sold every day for but a small fraction of the sums which were realised by Dynamite, Nimble, and Sister Sue.'

How often has our late lamented comrade and sportsman, Dooker, painted in stirring words the triumphs of the three brothers and their ponies? What a splendid combination the invincible trio were! To watch them play was to have a demonstration of good polo, as different from the rough-and-tumble game as light is from darkness. Year after year, representing Sussex County, did the Messrs. Peat compete at Hurlingham for the Open Champion Cup, as far back as 1880, proving themselves victorious four years in succession. Then Mr. John Watson and the famous Freebooters' team from Ireland had a look in, Sussex being victorious in 1885. The Freebooters again won the Cup two years in succession, and then for six years straight off the reel, from 1888-93, the Sussex County Club carried all before them, walking over on the last occasion but not taking the Cup.

The home of the brilliant trio at Wimbledon was a show of goldsmiths' art, and seldom have so many cups and tankards been won by a family, excepting, perhaps, in the case of Mr. Willy Walker, in the days of his pony-racing triumphs with the famous Dorothy and St. Helena, trained and ridden by himself, winning enough silver to stock a Bond Street jeweller's shop. The pony Dorothy was by Exminster by Newminster, out of Rosebud by Macaroni, and her record was such a remarkable one that we cannot help but wander from our subject to give it, although for the matter of that both ponies were entered to polo.

Out of the sixty-one races that Dorothy ran, she scored forty-one wins, being fourteen times second, four times third, and twice unplaced. St. Helena, who was raced over hurdles and the flat, ran twenty-four times, and was fifteen times first, seven second, once third, and once unplaced. A remarkable record, and one of the few bright spots in the history of pony racing, for Mr. Willy Walker always rode himself, and never had a shilling on the race.

What strides Polo has made since the Seventies, when the Messrs. Peat commenced to play, and a pony apiece served them sufficiently! At this early period of its history it was called 'Hockey on horseback,' with teams of eight or five players a side, and the game was looked upon as a soldier's pastime. Our first recollection runs back to a Polo Match and Polo Pony Show, held in Richmond Deer Park on Whit Monday, 1878. There was an entry of nine ponies for the cup, which was won by Racketty Jack, a bright bay, the property of Mr. E. H. Baldock, who was then Captain of the Hurlingham Park Club, and Mr. A. R. Peat showed his pony Glen. Then followed a polo match, Hurlingham *v.* The Royal Horse Guards Blue, captained by Mr. J. Evelyn Atherley, with five playing a side, the soldiers being beaten by three goals to one.

One of the first ponies played by the Messrs. Peat was a dark brown called Chance, a rare one for make and shape, and so fond of the game that he would follow the ball like a dog, and watch its flight in the air. He played in the days when the luxury of watering a ground and keeping it springy was unknown, and with the going as hard as a board, ponies' legs could not last and bear the strains as they can to-day. Such a favourite was the old pony, that he ended his days as a pensioner in the deer park at Houghton, when Mr. E. Kenyon

Stow lived there, established a club, and was a shining light in the Polo world.

Since those days marvellous changes have taken place in the method of playing, and the Messrs. Peat were instrumental in introducing hard and accurate hitting in place of dribbling, which has contributed in no small degree to the pace and science which characterises the play of to-day. Cups were played for, and Hurlingham made the centre of the Polo world, whither, every Saturday during the London season, flock beauty and fashion to enjoy a programme of polo and music.

Associated with the names of the three Messrs. Peat will always be that of Mr. Frank Mildmay, M.P., who made up the unconquerable Sussex County team. Graduating in sport at Cambridge in 1884, we well remember him taking his degree over the bloodthirsty course at Cottenham, when Yellow Dwarf carried his black-and-pink hooped jacket. It was while at the University that Mr. Mildmay bought two ponies that afterwards, when playing at Hurlingham, were so distinguished for their performances. The favourite mount, Judy, a little bay mare, topped like a coach horse, standing on the shortest legs, measured but thirteen hands two inches, marvellously quick and nippy, and very true on the ball; she was bought for the modest sum of 35*l*. Her stable companion, Kitty, another bay, standing thirteen hands three and a half inches, was bought at Tattersalls as a four-year-old for 20*l*. Perhaps the best pony of a good lot that Mr. Mildmay owned and made was the lovely mare Picquet, by Chypre, whom he bought from a farmer in Leicestershire, and for two years won with her at Hurlingham and other show rings. During his polo career, Mr. Mildmay made one of the biggest prices on record for two ponies, when he sold Picquet and another chestnut, Florence, to an American. The story goes that a proud father, of the land of Stars and Stripes, elated with his son's success at the Cambridge University, said that he should have the two best polo ponies in England. Repute pointed to Mr. Mildmay's ponies, which had just won at Hurlingham, and he was asked to name his price for the pair, which he did—viz., 850 guineas.

But here we are at Tattersalls, conjuring up all these memories of the past, as we hang over the rails and look down on the large and fashionable crowd gathered round the rostrum, eagerly taking up their position to see the ponies, whose turn came on about three o'clock. Mr. Tattersall, senior, was not

selling, although in the yard, easily distinguishable by his tall grey hat. In the crowd known to Polo fame was Mr. John Watson and his wife, from County Carlow, the best all-round player of this or any other age; Mr. Gerald Hardy, the new master of the Atherstone, and one of the staunchest supporters of the game; Mr. G. Warren, from Liverpool, who was there to buy for Mr. 'Willy' Walker; Major Clowes; Mr. William Younger, of the Edinburgh County Cup Team; Mr. E. Miller, of Rugby fame; Mr. Neil Haig; Messrs. E. and F. Hohler, the mainstay of Ranelagh; Sir Humphrey de Trafford; Mr. Muriel, of the Woodroyd Polo Stud; the Rev. T. Dale, the indefatigable new hon. sec. of the Ranelagh Polo Club; and the three Messrs. Peat. It is impossible to see these giants of Polo without conjuring up the picture of many a stirring game, when Sussex and the Irish Freebooters did battle at Hurlingham, and showed us what the elixir of pace really is. How Mr. Johnnie Peat, the flyman man, when on Dynamite or some other speedy animal, would come out with a meteor-like rush and gallop everything else to a standstill! But Mr. 'Boy' Peat was just as brilliant playing forward or half-back, though, perhaps, not putting so much powder into his strokes as the redoubtable 'Johnnie.' The eldest brother, Mr. Arthur Peat, was always back, although he was a brilliant player in any place of the game, and endued with all the qualities of a general to captain and keep his side together. It was seldom any one of the three brothers were seen wearing a pair of spurs when playing, and all their ponies, with very few exceptions, were English-bred ones. With two or three apiece on the ground, they were able to effect quick changes, and never tire a pony by playing him for too long together. It was a sad day for them when they decided to lay down the Polo stick, and the eleven ponies, with some fifteen saddles, bridles, riding and stable paraphernalia, were sent up to Tattersalls.

Polo men had come to buy character, and it was known that competition would be very keen, and price would not stop many from boldly taking their stand under Mr. Tattersall's eye, and nodding till the hammer fell. It was no secret that two good players were ready to start the crack pony of the team at 350 guineas, and that her destination was Liverpool, where so many good ponies have found their way, for the game flourishes in the North. No wonder then the polo pulse was beating at fever-height as Witch, the first of the team,

was run up the yard, a brown pony with white face and two heels that won first honours at Hurlingham Show in June, 1894, and she fell to Capt. Daley's bid of 155 guineas. Then came a better-known performer in the stout Gayland, a picture of make and shape, that carried Mr. Arthur Peat so well for some five or six seasons, and he is like the great Prussian Chancellor, a combination of blood and iron. The competition was keen to possess him, so that 300 guineas was reached before Mr. G. Warren secured him. Next came Nimble, a speedy bay mare, handiness itself with her steady, straight gallop on the ball, and she reached 400 guineas, going to Major 'Willy' Walker. Number four on the list was Dynamite, reputed to have the legs of anything that ever did battle on a polo field. With Mr. 'Johnnie' Peat in the saddle it was always pretty safe to anticipate a goal for his side. She is a bright bay mare, apparently thoroughbred, standing fourteen hands two inches in front of the saddle, something over that behind. The first bid was 350 guineas, and she quickly reached 460 guineas, at which price she became the property of Major Willy Walker, the brilliant back of the Liverpool Polo Club, who always shows to great advantage when mounted on a flyer. The next lot was the chestnut gelding, Piper by Chypre, own brother to Mr. Frank Mildmay's noted Picquet, and originally the property of Mr. Kenyon Stow, who sold him at the Leicester Repository in 1891 for 210 guineas, so that he must now be eleven or twelve years of age. He made 300 guineas. A fine galloper with a top-weight in the saddle, he has stood his work well, which stamps him as a sterling good polo pony. A bay mare named Firefly came next at 120 guineas, and Bullet, a black, went for 160 guineas. Then came the winsome chestnut, Sister Sue, and for her there was keen competition, for she was one whose praises Dooker always delighted to sing when describing a game; and Mr. A. Rawlinson got her for 310 guineas, which was not dear at such a sale. The last three ponies of the team were all experienced mounts that had seen much service, and Jenny Longtail, a bay, was knocked down at 90 guineas. Seagull, a grey mare that goes a great pace, skimming along like a bird, made 180 guineas, and old Edge, who can play like a book, and figured so prominently in many a hard-fought tournament, went to Mr. E. Hohler for 100 guineas. So ended this remarkable sale, the eleven ponies having reached the high average of 235 guineas, with a total of 2575 guineas. To say that the sale and



THE BROTHERS PEAT'S POLO PONIES AT TATTERSALLS.
"DYNAMITE."


CHARLES BRADLEY.

the retirement of the three brothers marks a period in the history of polo is no exaggeration, and the price paid for excellence is a clear proof of the estimation in which the rising generation of poloists hold the game. May polo go on and flourish throughout the land! for season by season new clubs spring up in the provinces, and players double and treble their numbers. Should fox-hunting ever receive its death-blow in these topsy-turvy times, then we should have to look to polo to supply the youth of the day with a safety valve to loose off their superfluous energy. Again, Mr. H. Cumberland Bentley comes to the rescue with one of his polo lyrics to give expression to our enthusiasm for the game—

‘Search the world all over, take the pastures one and all,
No better game than polo you can find;
For, like life, its twists and turnings teach us all to give and take,
And strengthens both the muscle and the mind.
So the ‘flying ball’ we’ll follow ever on from goal to goal,
Till minutes into hours quickly pass,
And we vow no other pleasure in excitement can compare
To such a glorious gallop on the grass.’

WILD WEST FISHING.

By KIRLY HARE.

S with the wild bison, so with the Wild West. Wildness wanes where railways run, generally speaking. The iron road runs wild animals off the face of the earth, and runs the Wild West to London.

Thirty years ago, however, when I first ‘hunted’ out West, steam-engines had not yet made tracks across the Rockies. Nature still kept a few secluded spots to herself. Americans’ tobacco-juice and Britons’ sandwich-papers were not, as now, ubiquitous. Nowadays one can have a picnic over the bones of Ptolemy, a flirtation with the maids of Kashmere, or a shooting match with the last of the Mohicans, as easily as one’s great-grandfather could get the length of his own little island.

The pleasantest, if not shortest, way to the Pacific thirty years ago was round Cape Horn. That was my opinion, though the voyage took five months. Lord Milton and Doctor Cheadle

the year before had gone by a 'short cut' straight across Canada, and spent twice five months getting through. They had just cut their way out of the British Columbian forest, and emerged at New Westminster, when I started for that same 'City of Stumps.'

After a proper amount of pitching and tossing, dodging icebergs, whales, and other little difficulties, the Hudson Bay Company's bluff-bowed tub rounded the Horn. She was only four hundred odd tons, and so short that she frequently stood up nearly straight, first on her figure-head and then on her 't'other end.' The exercise aided digestion, and I arrived off Victoria, Vancouver's Island, as healthy as a well-trained greyhound. A copper-coloured couple, male and female, paddled me ashore, where an obliging white man with a red nose led me to the hotel and ordered a drink. A gentleman with a diamond scarf-pin having provided a bottle of Bass, I asked, 'How much?'

'Sixpence,' said the bar-gentleman. At least, that was exactly what it sounded to my ears, squeezed out as it was from beside a big cigar.

Having placed a sixpence on the counter, I prepared to depart, congratulating myself on the cheapness of my 'peculiar vanity.' Then the bar-gentleman became suddenly electrified. He whisked the cigar from his mouth, glared at me fiercely, and hissed out, 'Six bits-s-s,' eventually making me comprehend that a sixpence was colonially called a 'bit.' So I paid half-a-crown more, and was a *bit* wiser.

Next morning, having paid twelve dollars for dinner, bed, and breakfast, I boarded the H. B. Co.'s steamer *Enterprise*, this being one of the alternate days on which it ran to New Westminster. The smoking bar-gentleman (who was the hotel proprietor) saw me off, politely hoped to see me again, and waved that everlasting cigar in farewell. When he had honoured me by personal service at dinner, he smoked; when he lighted me to my bedroom, he smoked; and when he called me in the morning he smoked, and his cigar-ash was an inch long even then—six o'clock! I was not favoured with the items of account, but I fancy my twelve-dollar bill included a box of cigars for the host, added in accidentally.

The passage across the Gulf of Georgia was delightful. Heading due north up Haro Strait, with San Juan Island on the right, we presently entered a lovely archipelago of islands.

For over two hours we wound our way in and out amongst rocky bluffs and wooded banks, sometimes scarcely a stone's throw distance on either side. Then we shot across open spaces like crystal lakes, apparently with no outlet, heading (so it seemed) straight on to an unbroken shore. Suddenly a narrow way would open, into which the steamer glided, to presently emerge again into another isle-girt stretch of glassy water—so clear and sunny, that every tint of foliage, every shade of scenery, was marvellously reflected in the mirror-like depths. And so out through Plumper's Pass and across the open gulf, up Fraser River to New Westminster, doing the ninety miles in ten hours.

At first sight the British Columbian capital reminded me of that Garden of Eden made famous by Martin Chuzzlewit, with all its trees cut down, and with a dozen shanties planted amongst the stumps and prostrate trunks. At a barn-like building called the Colonial Hotel I ordered eggs and bacon, and bread and cheese. After that twelve-dollar experience my mind had become frugal. Alas! frugality, as with John Gilpin, was on the wrong road. Eggs were a shilling each, bacon was two shillings a pound, and cheese was considered cheap at nearly double! which my frugality found out after devouring just half a sovereign's worth.

The friend at whose house I had been invited to stay was an official of the Government. Being, therefore, a man in authority, and summer heat not being conducive to office work, my friend had given himself a week's leave of absence; and official matters were so happily arranged, that his leave commenced on any day he pleased. That was what he told me shortly after my discovery of the brand-new shanty, which he called a Gothic cottage, wherein he dwelt. Between it and the Colonial Hotel lay a quarter of a mile of fallen tree-trunks, averaging from a dozen to a score of feet in circumference. The primeval forest having been fired before being felled, the fallen trunks (rather more numerous than leaves in Vallombrosa) were coated with charcoal. Upon, along, and over these I wended my way, chiefly on my hands and knees, in my best clothes. It was a black journey, requiring several rests. When I started it was evening. The shades of night had just fallen when I fell headlong over the half-way trunk (a primeval monster), and I arrived at the Gothic shanty just in time for supper, looking like a sweep fresh from London's grimiest chimney.

'And how do you propose spending your leave?' I asked my friend, Dick Ricketts, next morning, as we sat at breakfast.

'Suppose we go for a fishing excursion, eh?' suggested Dick. 'You used to be rather a good hand in that line at home, in the old country. I suppose you have brought your tackle, eh?'

Mr. Richard Ricketts was a fair little man, with an auburn beard which flowed majestically from beneath a tip-tilted nose, and a querying way of jerking out the exclamation 'eh?' Nine or ten months before my arrival he had made a romantic marriage, having eloped with the daughter of a colonial grandee. On the previous evening—the heathen Chineese servant, Un Hung, being out for the night—Mrs. Ricketts had opened the door for me, and been frightened nearly out of her wits. After seeing myself in a looking-glass I was not surprised, though desperately sorry. First impressions are everything, especially with newly married ladies; and in this case it was my special wish to make a pleasing one—which I didn't. Moreover, unfortunately, the result of my first appearance in such Satanic fashion might prove peculiarly disastrous, Mrs. Ricketts' condition just then being one that was very immediately interesting. Consequently the lady was now having her breakfast in bed.

Ere I could respond to my host's query, his heathen 'help' hurriedly entered the room, making mysterious faces. Of what Mr. Un Hung said I could understand not a word. His language was a mosaic of broken China and chips of American, with here and there odd chunks of Chinook, which his master informed me was pidgin English; the result of it all being that I was left to finish breakfast by myself, and that for the next day or two I saw next to nothing of my host.

In anticipation of our fishing excursion, I studied British Columbian pisciology under difficulties; and, in anticipation of any one's ignorance of that far-away colony's fish, I may as well here jot down something of my subsequent experiences. The subject is not a remarkably dry one, naturally; still, those who think it so can take a hop-skip-and-a-jump over it, and alight on ahead amongst the excursionists. But most of the sketch is fishy, more or less.

The finny tribes frequenting the fresh water consist of sturgeon, salmon, trout, round-fish, and candle-fish. If there are others, they neither came under my eyes nor between my teeth. Indeed, the last of the list, the candle-fish, can only be

said to have come between my teeth surreptitiously—imbibed as oil. As a fish it is simply a fraud, being in reality only a lamplighter.

The sturgeon (*Accipenser transmontanus*), though of the same species as that caught in England, is vastly superior as an article of food. Dressed in various ways, I have many times tried the fish at home, and found it dry and flavourless, barring the sauce; but on the Pacific coast a sturgeon cutlet is a *bonne bouche*, even without any sort of sauce. I never was more surprised, in a mild way, than when, after eating my first one in that Gothic shanty at New Westminster, my host Dick informed me what it was. I had vaguely imagined myself to be eating extremely tender veal with a gamy flavour, which reflected high honour on the heathen cook.

The sturgeon abounds on all this north-west coast between the forty-sixth and fifty-fourth degrees of latitude, and grows to an immense size—how large I cannot tell. The largest I myself saw in New Westminster was eleven feet long, and weighed 640 lbs. But, for all I know, they may grow to the size of the Caspian monsters, which often weigh over 20 cwt. They ascend the rivers nearly to their sources, going up the Fraser as far as the Rocky Mountains, and nearly two thousand miles up the Columbia. Those which get these distances from the sea generally stay a long time in fresh water, and wax fat.

The usual way of catching the sturgeon is by trolling with dead-bait—either a whole small fish or part of a bright-coloured one, tied on to the hook. This is dragged along the bottom of the most likely spots, generally the sides of mud-banks, where the fish are in the habit of feeding. The moment one is hooked, up he rushes to the surface, probably to find out what is the matter. Then he finds the matter is worse than he thought—worse than down below. The Indian who stands ready at the bow of the canoe with a ready-poised spear, drives it into the fish; and that sturgeon's curiosity is satisfied *pro tem*. Down, in deep disgust, dives the monster, and off as fast as he can lay fins to the water. With might and main paddles the Indian in the stern, trying to keep up, while the one in the bow pays out the line. Should it happen to catch, the canoe instantly dives after the fish, and follows it under water, minus the Indians. But that seldom happens.

Glorious sport is sturgeon trolling, when you know how to do it and can swim a mile or two. A five-and-twenty-pound

salmon's first rush, when neatly hooked, gives one a delightful thrill that tingles from top to toe, no doubt. But, then, one has not to rush after the salmon oneself. Flying over the water after a runaway five-hundred-pound sturgeon is a mighty different sensation. Exultation, excitement, and fear cause a thrill that tingles all over a whole canoe and its crew all at once, as they race through the foaming water ten miles an hour, never knowing what *might* happen. A concentrated essence of thrill *that* is, which one must experience to understand. It makes most other fishing seem tame, like quail-shooting after bagging Bengal tigers.

About the salmon I need say little. Nowadays, any grocer can tell you all about it (as pictured upon tins), and sell you any amount of pounds of its over-boiled, squashy, and unrecognisable fragments. Still, there may be *something* to learn.

Two sorts of salmon arrive in the Fraser in June. One, called Quinnat, is a large, thick fish, which sometimes weighs as much as eighty pounds; the other, called Chachalool, with shorter head and thinner body, is seldom over a dozen pounds. This is the spring run.

The summer salmon (*Paucidens*), which runs towards the end of July, is an extremely beautiful and well-shaped little fish of about half a dozen pounds.

Towards the end of September commences the autumn run, and continues the greater part of October. This salmon (*Lycaodon*), although large, is inferior to either of the preceding. It has no spots, is of a dirty greyish-green colour, and the males have large teeth and hooked upper jaw—a regular Roman nose, hanging down over the lower lip like the upper mandible of a parrot's beak. These autumn fish remain in the fresh water all the winter, returning to the sea as soon as the snow begins to melt in the following spring; and, as far as I know, or have heard *proved*, this is the only salmon which returns to salt water. Of all the millions of fish which ascend the Fraser during the spring and summer runs, not one has ever been seen going down again alive. They swim up to spawn, and, having accomplished that, swim onwards, until, bruised and torn, starved and ragged and eaten up with sores, they at last die from utter exhaustion.

Strange to say, they never feed in fresh water, and consequently will take no kind of bait. The most perfectly tied salmon flies and the most tempting of live or artificial baits will

all be tried in vain. When caught in salt water, food of some sort is usually found in the stomach; but, of all the many thousands taken and split open inland, not one ever showed a sign of having taken any kind of nourishment.

The salmon-trout (*Spectabilis*) is of a different habit, and does return to the sea after spawning. It averages about two pounds, and, unlike the salmon, will take a fly and other baits, the favourite one being dried salmon roe.

As I trust the reader (especially if of the gentle craft) will presently join our trout-fishing party, just ahead, I will here only mention that the British Columbian trout (*Fario stellatus*) swarms in almost every stream of the country.

The round-fish (*Coregonus quadrilateralis*), one of the salmonidæ, ranks next to the salmon as a food-supplying fish to the Indians. Immense shoals ascend the Fraser during the summer, and are caught, split, and dried in the same way as the natives cure salmon. At the end of autumn, after spawning, they return to the sea. Many, however, of those which get up to the far inland lakes remain in the fresh water all the winter. Like the salmon-trout, they will take flies and other baits. They are rarely over three pounds, but strong and handsome, of a dun colour, with bright scales. They require strongish tackle and careful handling. Sometimes, on first feeling the hook, the round-fish shoots bodily into the air, and only a sharp dip of the rod saves a smash. Then the desperate rushes—here, there, and all round the compass—are astonishing. In fact, it is not only the gamest of the British Columbian fish, but also the gamiest—the flavour being quite equal to that of the famed white-fish of the Canadian lakes.

Last on the list, and least in size, comes that piscine fraud of a lamplighter, the candle-fish (*Thaleichthys pacificus*), or, as the Indians call it, 'Eulakon.' Something like a sardine, only larger, it is the fattest fish that swims. When put over the fire in a frying pan, it completely melts away, and in this form is drunk by the Indians with great relish—especially in winter, if no whisky is in the neighbourhood.

During moonlight nights the Eulakon come up to sport, and the surface of the water seems alive with them. The Indian, eager for an oleaginous drink, starts out fishing for it, with a long pole studded with three-inch bone teeth. Quietly paddling amongst the glistening shoals, he sweeps his 'fishing-rod' through the mass of lamplighters, and at each sweep brings

into the canoe a score or so of *Thaleichthys pacificus*. When the moon goes down, the Indian goes home, and makes preparations for the entertainment. First he runs a wick of cypress-bark through sundry candle-fish, and lights up. Then he piles *Thaleichthys pacificus* into an iron pot, and puts it on the fire; and, when all the fish-frauds have run away to oil, the noble red man has a big drink. Then he goes to bed happy, thoroughly oily all over, inside and out, and enjoys luminous dreams of *Thaleichthys pacificus*.

By this time, probably, the marine candle has given place to the electric light on land, and been much disturbed by steam-boats on the water. As a native drink, it must have fallen out of fashion altogether, being a non-intoxicant, and Indians not being teetotallers if they can help it. But the *Thaleichthys pacificus* is a fraud still, only he lies on a different line—in tins, and calls himself a Sardine.

So much for the fish. Now for the fishing.

On the third day of my advent to Gothic Cottage, my host rushed into the room where I was quietly writing, and quite startled me.

‘Thank Heaven!’ he cried, rapturously, ‘it’s like *me*! It isn’t black!’

I stopped writing, and looked at him. It was just seven o’clock in the evening. Had my friend been drinking? I hardly thought he could have dined, as meals, since that first breakfast, had been at a discount, and I had found it best to board myself at the Colonial Hotel till the cottage cuisine came round again.

‘It isn’t black!’ repeated Dick, smiling inanely, with staring eyes fixed on my face.

So I thought I had better say something.

‘Why not?’ I asked. ‘Why shouldn’t it be black?—and what is it?—and what the dickens are you raving about?’

Mr. Ricketts took a step backwards. Then he collapsed into a chair, fortunately just behind him.

‘What!’ he gasped. ‘You don’t know, eh?’

‘Why, how should I?’ I responded; ‘and if it’s a conundrum, I give it up.’

Then my excited host burst out with a perfect avalanche of explanation, all disjointed, from which I gathered that another visitor had arrived at Gothic Cottage in the shape of a juvenile Ricketts, and that the happy father sat before me.

‘But why did you suppose that he would be *black*?’ I asked. ‘Why not spotted or striped?’

At the end of Dick’s rambling answer, in which he intermixed heredity, physiology, survival of the fittest, and other eccentricities, I began to understand. *I* had been the cause of all the bother! My presenting myself in the disguise of his Satanic majesty might have caused — Good gracious! Did anybody ever hear the like? I didn’t get over it for a month—not till I stood godfather to Master Ricketts and saw what a jolly little chap he was; and that he was a lovely pink, with a nose just like his father’s.

Then, at last, Dick and I did go fishing.

Our rods and tackle being all in order, and a stock of provisions packed, we embarked on board the steamer *Alliance* (Captain Irving) and started up the Fraser. The heavier portion of our baggage consisted of a change of clothes, a ridge-pole tent, and an Indian to carry it and cook for us. Late in the afternoon, after a half-hour’s stick on Murderer’s Bar, we arrived at Hope, seventy miles from New Westminster. Having some three hours of daylight yet left, we proceeded to our destination, a stream about half a dozen miles away. Through primeval forest, along the side of a five-thousand-foot mountain range, is not the best of travelling; and we did not hit the stream till sunset. Then we had to ascend it for another mile—the forest being so dense, and overhanging the bank so much, that fishing just there would have been too difficult. At length we came to something of a plateau, where the pools were larger and the banks more open; and here we determined to pitch our camp.

The Indian was soon at work chopping down a small tree for firewood. I put up the tent, and Dick Ricketts put his rod together to try and catch something for supper. Although almost too dark, there was still a glint of daylight across the pool at our feet; enough to see that the fish were on the feed.

The stream reminded me somewhat of the Dart, above Ashburton, but with much greater fall and larger rocks. In a succession of waterfalls, rapids, and pools, it rushed and foamed down the western slope of the Cascade Mountains, cutting its course through the mighty forest, till it reached the Fraser.

‘Hurrah! I’ve got a whopper!’ shouted Dick, who was standing some thirty yards off. ‘Hi, old man! come and help!’

The clear dusk suddenly darkened into night, and we had some trouble in seeing how to land that fish. However, after it had rushed wildly into every spot of the pool that was pitch dark, we shovelled it between us into the landing-net and brought it to the fire-light. It was a two-pound trout, a splendidly shaped fish, with most perfectly marked though dark-coloured spots, fat as a young Banting.

'Which fly did he take, Dick?' I asked, after examining the cast—a moth as stretcher, and a golden-yellow hackle as dropper. 'The moth, wasn't it?'

'You're just wrong. 'Twas the dropper,' answered Dick, as he superintended the trout's cooking, leaving the Indian to do the rest.

A freshly caught broiled trout, followed by tender loin steak, flap-jacks, and roasted potatoes, is a dinner fit for an epicure; at all events I thought so after eating that one 'under the greenwood tree.' And I don't think I ever felt more contented and lazily happy than when smoking my first pipe afterwards, reclining on a couch of elastic pine-tops. Then we turned into our blankets, just tired enough to be comfortable. The air, fragrant with the aroma of pines, sighed softly through the trees. The rushing water sang a gentle lullaby, and Dick Ricketts snored a solemn solo.

The sun had been up fully an hour when we sat down next morning to breakfast, but the salt-salmon cutlets and coffee did not detain us long. It was a lovely morning, warm and not too bright, and the trout fed well. For two or three hours the sport was first-rate. Then the fish got dainty in their choice of flies, and Dick and I sat down to compare bags. The average size of the trout seemed to run something over a pound, but every now and again there turned up a comparative 'whopper.' Dick had two over four, and I had killed one within an ounce of five pounds, our two bags totalling just on four-and-twenty pounds. The most killing fly, according to Dick, was his golden-brown dropper. The favourite, according to *my* trout, was a fawn colour, made of hair of a hare's ear mixed with pale olive mohair, with brown feather wings and tail. But the old-fashioned red hackle seemed as good as anything, after all.

After resting for an hour, and eating a snack of cold salmon, we lit a digestive pipe and resumed work. Dick went some forty yards above me, taking his stand upon an almost pointed rock, overlooking a large, deep pool. He said he had

seen a 'monster' there, about three times as large as my five-pounder.

Just as I had landed and disengaged my fly from a fat two-pounder, I heard an amazing splash. For a moment I thought Dick had got hold of his 'monster.' But, where was Dick? He had disappeared, and there was a great commotion in the water just below where he had been. Then his face emerged from the neighbourhood of the 'monster,' and his arms waved about like flails. He was out of his depth, and could not swim. Throwing down my rod, I scrambled to him over the rocks, slipped off my bag and coat, and dropped into the water.

Carefully keeping at arm's length, to prevent his grappling me, I tried to get hold of Dick's hair. It was too short. I forgot that, only two days before, Dick had been cropped. However, I managed to grip a handful of flowing beard, and tried to tow the owner ashore. It was a harder job than I expected. Dick was just gone far enough to be flurried, but not sufficiently drowned to a proper state for safe salvation. He insisted on hugging me, and succeeded in seizing one of my legs. Fortunately at that moment my other foot touched the bottom. In a couple of minutes more we were both lying on a flat rock, puffing and blowing, with the water pouring from us in miniature cascades. Neither of us was much the worse for the ducking, except that we lost time going back to camp for a change of clothes. In the evening we caught a few fish close to camp, and turned into our blankets almost immediately after dinner.

Next day we fished up-stream, towards the pool Dick had so unfortunately disturbed. He fondly hoped for another look at that 'monster.'

'All right,' exclaimed Dick, in a great state of excitement, 'yonder he lies, in the same identical spot. I'm blessed if I think he has ever moved!'

Sure enough, on the far side, about two feet from the surface, lay one of the largest trout it had ever been my luck to behold.

'Don't slip off and take a header on the top of him again to-day,' said I.

'Not if I can help it, old boy,' responded Dick, 'or unless you are within gripping distance of my beard. But I must get hold of that big beggar, somehow ;' and then Dick set to work

to get hold of him, with his golden-yellow dropper and a green tail-fly.

Very deftly did he drop them over the monster's nose, and skilfully did he work his practised wrist to give the flies the natural movement. Many times did he change the feathered bait ; but all in vain. The monster was evidently an ancient and cunning patriarch, much too old a fish to be caught with feathers.

'The cursed brute's sulky,' growled Dick, after about the twentieth cast, 'or else he must have gorged himself yesterday on what came out of my pockets.'

'Let me have a try,' said I.

'You may try, and welcome. But I'll bet you the best square meal at Hope that you don't move the beast,' answered Dick, somewhat sulkily ; 'unless you drive him away,' he added, as a saving clause.

It so happened that I had brought a small-sized spoon-bait, and, having on the previous day taken my largest fish with it, I had a mind to try the same simple device on this sulky leviathan. Dick had walked off, and was now seated on a comfortable stone under the shade of the trees—and there I presently joined him.

'So you don't think it's worth while trying, eh?' said he, as he saw me coming.

'Not a bit of it, my boy. I'm only going to let him rest a while,' answered I, taking a seat by his side and lighting my pipe.

After a quiet quarter of an hour's wait I climbed on to the tall rock, changed my cast for the spoon-bait tackle, and prepared for business. The trout had not moved an inch, lying as motionless and (to all appearance) as unobservant as ever. My first throw fell short, and the fish took no notice. Again I made a cast, and again (owing to a slip of the foot) I threw short.

'What on earth are you doing?' cried out Dick. 'I never saw a fellow throw a fly like that before. If I didn't know there were none in British Columbia, I should think you were trying with a worm.'

'It's a spoon, old man, I've got on,' answered I.

'What humbug!' said Dick, who had no faith in spooning. 'If you come to that, I'll try my knife and fork.'

'So you shall, presently, when I've got the old rogue caught and cooked,' I responded, as I made another throw ; and this time it was far enough ; the spoon dropped a couple of yards beyond, and about the same distance above the trout's head,

and I drew the wobbling little bait right in front of his very nose. But never a move made he. 'It's no good, I'm afraid,' said I to myself, 'he really *is* too sulky,' when, lo! just as the spoon was about a yard this side of him, level with his midriff—if a fish *has* a midriff—round came his head, whiz went my reel, and the 'monster' was hooked hard and fast. I had struck him strongly, almost unconsciously, and felt sure of my tackle. Like a flash the trout rushed down the centre of the pool, making my reel fairly shriek again. Some sixty yards of line spun out in about half a second. Suddenly the trout stopped dead short and shot himself into the air. Down went the point of my rod, and down went the fish to the bottom of the water, and there he stuck.

'What's up, eh?' inquired Dick, ranging up alongside of me, looking surprised.

'Not your monster,' I answered; 'he won't move from the bottom, just at present. He's down there, trying to rub my spoon out of his mouth against the stones, I expect.'

'*I'll* soon move the beggar!' cried Dick; and he did move him, with about half a hundredweight of rock.

And now the fish rushed straight back again, hardly giving me time to gather in the line. For ten minutes after that, having seemingly lost his way and in a hurry to find it again, that trout raced in all directions. It was give and take, up and down, and all round the compass, till my wrist wanted a rest. Dick had plunged into the rapid at the tail-end of the pool, as a kind of long-stop, armed with the butt of his rod. When the monster paid a visit in that direction, Dick roared at him, and thrashed the water, and danced like a maniac. At last the gallant old fish was tired out, and I was able to tow him to a shallow, where Dick bagged him in the landing-net.

'Hurrah! I've got him at last!' shouted the late long-stop, hugging the monster to his heart. 'I told you I'd have the beggar somehow. Here, come and hook him on your pocket-scale and let's see what he weighs—a dozen pounds if he weighs half a one, I'll bet.'

'Draw it mild, old man,' said I, as I fastened my little machine to a handy branch. 'Some pounds under that, I guess.'

'Nine pounds four ounces!' roared Dick, the moment the scale set steady. 'By thunder, he *is* a monster!'

That evening, bad luck to it! the wind suddenly changed, and rain set in steadily. Fishing was at an end. So, next

morning, we struck camp and started for Hope, with nearly half a hundredweight of trout. The town of Hope consisted of three shanties, two out-houses, a wigwam, and a Royal Hotel with four small rooms. There was a billiard-table, of course; and Dick and I played till dinner-time. The host, who was French, a couple of Mexican mule-train packers, Dick and myself, sat down to the *table d'hôte*; and the man-of-all-work (who looked like a retired murderer) joined us as soon as he had dished up the salt salmon and potatoes. After the banquet Dick and I played billiards till bed-time. Billiards was the concentration of all the amusement, excitement, and employment which the town of Hope afforded; and we had the total population as onlookers, all seated on one bench.

Next day we went by the *Alliance*, on its return journey from Yale, back to New Westminster. The 'monster' was presented to the Governor as a trophy, and Dick and I helped his Excellency eat it that same evening.

The following winter, while wild-fowl shooting on the coast, I learnt something of the salt-water fish and fishing. Off the mouth of the Fraser I saw what I first imagined to be stakes sticking up out of the water, till I saw them moving. My companion called them fin-backed sharks. But they proved to be whales, a small species with immensely long-pointed back fin. The exact length I was never near enough to measure.

The halibut is the largest flat fish, sometimes weighing nearly four hundred pounds. The Indians catch it trolling, the same as sturgeon. But the halibut spear has a movable head, to which is fastened a skin blown full of air. When the fish is struck, the long haft is jerked from the short spear-head, and the skin-buoy keeps the fish on the surface. Then the halibut tows the canoe till tired, and is easily killed.

The octopus grows out here to an immense size, sometimes fourteen feet across. When an Indian sees one in not too deep water, he quietly insinuates a long spear between the cuttle-fish's arms, and drives the spear-head through the centre of its body. Then that fortunate Indian gives a dinner-party.

The dog-fish (*Acanthius suckleyi*) is also a native delicacy. The Indians eat its flesh, which they wash down with the dog-fish-liver oil.

The cod-fish is sometimes caught. But either the fish is scarce or the Indians do not fish in deep-enough water, for very few come to market.

Rock-cod (*Sebastes inermis*) are exceedingly plentiful, running from half-a-pound up to a dozen. They are a bright yellowish-brown, and favourites at most tables. To my taste they were not worth the melted butter, being soft, watery, and flavourless.

The chirus (*Chirus hexagrammus*) is nearly as common as rock-cod, though totally different both to palate and eye. It grows to about four pounds, and equals a dolphin in beauty and a trout in flavour.

The herring (*Malletta cærulea*) crowds into the Gulf of Georgia in March and April, and continues coming most of the summer. The main run is in April, and then every inlet is so crammed that the Indians can ladle out fresh herrings with landing-nets or frying-pans, or even with their hats, and feast upon their *bonne bouche*—herring spawn.

The viviper (*Ditrima*), though no good when cooked, is a beauty when alive, and a marine wonder of the world. Instead of spawning, it produces its young 'All alive, O!' just like a Christian. And the baby vivipers immediately swim about and feed as if they knew all about it. It goes by the name of 'perch,' and is a most beautifully marked bright blue fish, coming into the Gulf to spend the summer, and retiring (with its juvenile progeny) into the deep sea about the end of September. I never had the chance of tasting one, and sincerely hope I never shall.

Crustaceans are here a singularly varied assortment, though, strange to say, the lobster is an absentee. But crabs are many and various; some of half a dozen pounds' weight, and some with soft shells; some which belong to the Arctic oceans, and some which are only probably at home in the tropics. Unless some of the species got dropped from balloons, their arrival in the Gulf of Georgia is a Wild West puzzle. All the sorts I ate for supper were excellent, but the soft-shell variety of nightmare I found the most soothing.

The oyster (*Ostrea lurida*) is plentiful, but very small, and tolerably good as a makeshift in the absence of a better. Another bivalve, the pecten (*Pecten hastatus*), has a peculiarly powerful adductor muscle, which he uses unexpectedly. If not looked after, he hops out of your plate, and very probably (if near enough) jumps clean out of the window. The pecten is, possibly, a marine ancestor of the jumping frog.

The great clam (*Schizotheres Nuttallii*) is a most precious

mollusc to the coast Indians, who keep them dried for winter consumption. My first, and last, attempt at clam-eating was at a place called Mud Bay. The Indian and squaw, who acted as our servants, ran short of their favourite food ; so, under the generalship of the squaw, we sallied forth one moonlight night to fish for clams. It was low water, and the muddy sand-banks were left comparatively dry for nearly a mile out. On this fishing-ground my attention was presently directed by the commanderess to something in the mud, which I stooped down to examine. The next instant I was blinded by a jet of salt water which shot up out of the mud.

'That's a clam,' said the squaw, as she hoisted out the amateur fountain-maker with her stick, while I wiped my face.

Sure enough, it was a *Schizotheres Nuttallii*. He had buried himself about a foot beneath the surface, with his trunk-like feeding-tube just reaching to the upper air, waiting to receive visitors.

An hour later we were back in camp with a large basketful, and the happy savages cooked supper. First they roasted the clams till they opened, then pulled them from the shells and popped them in boiling water, thickened with flour. When the stew was done I tasted it, and had to spit it out.

That was thirty years ago, and I can remember the taste of that abominable stew still.

THE JILTED 'COPER.'

By 'CHAMELEON.'



HE was a prosperous 'coper,'
 She was a maiden fair ;
 But little he recked that beside him she stood
 As he toiled in his office chair—
 Toiled with his head full of records,
 Compiling his yearly sale
 Of pedigreed stock, and the Lord knows not what,
 With eloquence ne'er to fail !

Scratch, scratch ! At a two-nineteen
 For the mile his pen drove along,
 And the false and the true so artfully mixed
 Poured forth like the notes of a song :

With a step as light as the fairies,
When o'er the sward they danced,
The girl he loved had entered his den
And over his shoulder glanced!

Then a sudden tremor seized her,
Pale grew her lips and cold,
For she thought that of the things he'd sell,
She was most badly sold!
For she read, 'Nell moves more grandly
Than any *grande dame* you name,
And her legs are marvels of beauty,
As you'll own when you see the same!

'Her head's carried high and haughty,
And her body and ribs are neat,
And I think when she shows in the summer
She'll be fit from ears to feet!
Every man must surely know her,
And the beauties she can claim,
Reputed daughter of Patsy Broadhurst
By dam well known to fame!'

Then the maid her voice uplifted—
Likewise her hand, 'tis said—
And while the first near deafened his ears,
The latter fell on his head;
'She moves like a lady!—does she?
And pray, sir, what do I?
And her legs are marvels of beauty?
For shame, for shame, sir—fie!

Her body—ribs—you know them?
And you know that they are 'neat'?
And you also appear to know her
From ears right down to her feet!
Yes! every man here knows her!
You villains, oh, for shame!
And now to a friend of her charms you write,
That Nell with her brazen fame!'

With angry steps she left him,
There in his office chair,
The unfinished lot of horses to sell,
The cause of the whole affair!
She would not list to reason,
They ne'er spoke again, alas!
And her name was not that of the 'coper,'
When she passed from the maiden class.

THE POPPINGTON PEARLS.

By FINCH MASON.

PROCRASTINATION is the thief of time.' So ran one of the moral precepts that I copied out under compulsion many a time and oft, with numerous blots and not a few tears, in Childhood's Hour, and which I hated accordingly; so much so, that I made a wicked vow in my youthful heart that when I grew up to be a man—I, of course, took it for granted that that desirable consummation would take place—I would procrastinate until all was blue, and take my chance of nicking Time. I included all the rest, of course, such as 'Honesty is the best Policy' (I compounded with my creditors for one and threepence in the pound only the other day). 'It is never too late to mend,' 'Waste not, want not,' and others too numerous and detestable to mention. But I think, though, I hated the Procrastination chap—I declare I can hardly spell the word even now—the worst of the whole 'bilin.'

And have I kept my word? 'I believe you, my boy!' as dear old Paul Bedford used to say. Why, bless you, I'm never in time for anything except my dinner. I make an exception for the pleasantest hour of the twenty-four, and am invariably 'all there when the bell rings,' you bet. So notorious, indeed, is my virtue or failing—call it what you like, I do not care—that my friends go to the length of prophesying that when the time comes I shall be too late for my own funeral. I sincerely hope I shall.

With the reputation I have got, then, for procrastination, it was but due to myself, that I should keep it up by being late, as usual, for the meet of the hounds, that celebrated pack known in the columns of the *Field* newspaper as the V. H., or Vale of Hogwash, at Bobbington Cross Road, to finish the season, as the card announced. It was a hot, dry, and dusty morning in April, and I thought to myself as I dawdled over my dressing with the window wide open, it don't much matter how much I'm late such a day as this. There can't be an atom of scent, and the hounds are sure to potter about all day, and do no good, so I'll procrastinate more than usual. And I did. Enjoyed my



Twice More

Over we went with lots to spare.

breakfast thoroughly, thank you. Kedgeree and a dip into the *Daily Telegraph*. No divorce cases on! dear me! what do people mean by becoming so virtuous all of a sudden? drop the *Telegraph*, and try what devilled kidneys and the *Sportsman* will do to comfort my wounded feelings. Ha, much better! my City and Suburban nag going strong and well, and Vigilant and Wizard don't see what is to beat him. He's come to half the price I backed him at, too. I'll hedge my money to-morrow as ever is (if I don't forget it), and stand to win a bit to nothing. 'Vot a larx!' as my German friend, the Baron de Grogwitz would say. A dab of marmalade, and I felt I did not want any more breakfast until to-morrow morning. How about a liqueur? I think so—Yellow Chartreuse, with a dash of Scotch whiskey—a cigar of course; and, Robert, you can tell 'em to bring Rory O'More round in ten minutes' time.'

'You're very late, sir,' observed my groom as, having mounted, I gather up my reins and settle myself leisurely in the saddle.

As I object to being told what I already know, I bid him 'go to the devil' as a reward for his information, and I feel that in so doing, I go up in his estimation a hundred per cent. Most useful expression 'go to the devil,' I always think, and if used judgmatically saves one a lot of annoyance. 'Get you a keb, sir?' 'Go to the devil.' 'Race card or *Sportsman*, capting?' 'Go to the devil.'

The only time, in the course of a long experience, I did *not* find it answer was once at Rome. I made one of a party one fine day to drive out to Albano. Having put up the carriage on arrival we sallied forth to see the famous waterfall, and met *en route* a lot of the usual begging fraternity. 'Andate a diavolo,' was all they got out of *me*. They left, as I thought, to do as they were bid. I was wrong for once, however, for as I was expatiating to the 'lubly gal' by my side on the beauties of the miniature Niagara, down from the parapet above came a big stone which all but hit me in the eye; and looking up I just caught sight of a mendicant's head disappearing over the top of the bridge. He'll try that game on again, thought I, and picking up the stone, I waited for another view. It soon came, and then was my chance. Away went the rock, and a howl of rage informed me better than words that I had hit the bull's eye the first time of asking. No more stones after that, and my fair companion's limpid blue eyes gazed upwards into mine with an 'Oh, I am so proud of you!' sort of expression that more than

repaid me for my trouble. Unfortunately, the poor darling had no money, or I could have brought off a *coup*, and walked over for the Matrimonial Stakes with the greatest ease. I felt I could.

‘Ay di mi!’ as the Spaniards say. What a terrible thing is money, or rather the want of it.

But I am digressing. The hounds were supposed to meet at eleven o’clock, eight miles off, and I started at exactly ten minutes past the hour.

Query: what price me if they found in the first covert they drew? But they wouldn’t find such a day as this, and if they did they wouldn’t run a yard, of this I felt morally certain; so beyond a jog-trot when I got out of sight of the house, for I did not want my man, who was sure to be watching me, to think I meant to hurry myself, I did not exert myself in the least to make up for lost time.

At this comfortable and easy mode of progressing, I had managed to get over six miles of my journey, when an unmistakable twang of the horn in the distance made both old Rory O’More and myself prick up our ears. They were ‘drawing Nightingale Wood for a pony!’ and towards me too, as I could tell by the wind, which blew in my face. Things could not have turned out better. Procrastination, I thank thee again. A gate and a stile stopped the way; the former was padlocked, so Rory and I popped over the companion obstacle, and continued gaily along the path towards another stile. Over that too, and then I gave my old horse his head over the pasture beyond. Again I heard the horn, and I could see a red coat, and another and another galloping away as hard as they could go outside the wood, which stood on an eminence only two fields off. My blood was up now. ‘Come along, old cock!’ I shouted to Rory, and scorning the gate, made for the fence in front of us at best pace. The hedge was a trifle, but there was, as I knew, a biggish ditch t’other side, which, however, my excited hunter made nothing of. Over we went with heaps to spare, nearly jumping on a couple of men who were in the act of scrambling out of the ditch. A couple of rum-looking chaps they were, too, and not a bit like countrymen, as I saw at a glance. I pulled up, and looked at them, and they looked at me, and precious scared they looked for some reason or other.

‘Well, have you seen anything of them?’ I inquired.

‘Seen hanything of ’oo?’ was the reply from one of them.

'Why, the hounds, to be sure, you idiot!' said I, waxing wroth. 'Did they run to Nightingale Wood, or are they drawing it afresh?'

One chap looked at his mate, and his mate looked at him. Then the one who was spokesman replied sheepishly—

'Dunno wot ye're drivin' at, guv'nor!'

"'Dunno wot I'm drivin' at!'" I blurted out in a rage. 'Why, where on earth have you lived all your lives? Who are you, and what are you?'

'We're strangers in these parts, guv'nor; and it seems to me a queer start as two respectable coves from London can't come down on a visit to their relations in the country for a little fresh hair, without being cross-exhamined by the first stranger as we comes acrost. We wos birds-nestin'—that's wot we wos a-doin' if you wish to know; wasn't we, Chyarley?' replied the spokesman, appealing to his friend in the background, who grunted an affirmative. 'It ain't *your* land, I 'ope,' he went on; 'cos, if so, I 'umbly 'pologise for the hintrusion.'

'No, it *isn't* my land, worse luck,' I replied; 'but, for all that, I advise you to be off it, for if the hounds find and the fox runs this way, as he's pretty sure to do, you're bound to head him, and then you'll catch it, I promise you. Come, off you go!'

They debated for a moment, but understanding that I meant to see the last of them, they slunk off, casting very malevolent glances at me as they did so, and muttering some remarks the reverse of complimentary to my noble self.

Yes, they were a brace of as queer-looking cards as ever I had set eyes on. Both small men, one thickset, the other wiry, attired in long greatcoats, with billy-cock hats on their closely-cropped heads, their faces pale, and their chins desperately in want of a shave—these were hardly the class of customers one would expect to meet with emerging from a ditch in the heart of the country.

'Cockneys, no doubt,' I soliloquised, as, having watched them into the road, I once more set my horse going; 'and devilish ill-looking customers, too—looked as if they had just committed a burglary of some sort: and, by Jove! I shouldn't wonder if they hadn't.'

At that moment I met a farm-labourer I knew, to whom, as he opened the gate for me to pass through, I mentioned my friends from town.

'All right, zur!' he said; 'I'll look arter 'un. They're

a-lookin' about arter them there plovers' heggs, ar reckon, and master won't stand no strangers a-doin' o' that, you may be shewer. They won't come again—at least, not whilst I'm here, ne'er you fear, zur !'

And, having chucked him a shilling, I once more put the impatient Rory O'More into a canter, and was soon in the main ride of Nightingale Wood, where were assembled all the field. And how they were chattering ! Talk about magpies ! Why, the feathered wearers of the Duke of Portland's colours weren't *in* it this bright spring morning. Their tongues were all wagging so that they actually forgot to chaff me about my procrastination as usual.

What was up ? What was the news ? 'Here, tell me, somebody, quick !' And when I was told, a baby in arms might have knocked me down as easy as possible, so astonished was I.

There had been a burglary the night before at Poppington Towers, the famous Poppington pearls had been abstracted, and Lady Poppington was nearly demented in consequence. The bulk of her ladyship's jewellery was secured in a safe, they added, but, as ill-luck would have it, the precious pearls were in an ordinary dressing-case, packed up ready for travelling, their owner going on a visit the following day, and had been left on a table by the lady's-maid—all ready to hand for the robbers, as it were, who had promptly taken advantage of the circumstance, and bolted with their find, without troubling to seek for more.

I listened attentively to what everybody had to say on the subject, and then suddenly exclaimed, 'By Jove ! *I've* got 'em !'

'So it seems !' ejaculated Major Bingo, against whom I had violently cannoned in my hurry to be off, much to his personal discomfort.

Regardless of all else, I turned my horse's head and galloped off as hard as ever I could go, to the utter astonishment of the bystanders, who must have thought me mad. Through the wood, through the wood, like a forest fairy ; out at the gate, and at a gallop right across the wheat-field beyond, regardless of the damage ; over the fence at the end ; and never drew bridle until I pulled up the astonished Rory O'More at the very spot from which I had seen my two cockney friends emerging less than half an hour ago.

Off my horse in a twinkling, and—Hey ! for a hunt in the ditch.

Hurrah ! it's a case of 'chopped' in cover with a vengeance,

for I hadn't rummaged about for a minute before my trusty hunting-whip ran against something hard in the recesses of a huge bramble-bush. Regardless of scratches, I inserted an arm this time, and finding the whatever it was possessed a handle, laid hold, and brought it to bank.

One glance was sufficient!

The next instant I sprang to my feet, and gave vent to my feelings in a tremendous shout of victory—for there in front of me was a leather dressing-case with the Countess of Poppington's name on a brass-plate outside, without doubt the very one containing the famous pearls abstracted by the burglars the previous night.

'Oh, yes—they're there, fast enough!' for I could hear something rattle inside, and more delicious music I never listened to. 'If the Dowager don't give me Lady Beatrice after this, why, I die a bachelor!' thought I, as once more mounting Rory O'More, and with the precious box on the pommel of my saddle, I made for the road as quickly as I could, much to the old horse's disgust.

No trotting—no procrastination of any sort this time. Flying would be too slow on an occasion of this sort.

Poppington Towers was but three miles off, and ride hard as I did, I declare it seemed three hours before I got there. What a ring at the bell I gave, to be sure, when I jumped off the now reeking Rory O'More's back!

'Do you know *this* when you see it?' I inquired of the astonished butler, when he appeared in answer to my noisy summons, holding out as I spoke the leather dressing-case.

'Good Gawd!' exclaimed the worthy man, starting back; 'why, if it ain't her ladyship's——'

'Yes, I know it is, Binns! Where is her ladyship? In the drawing-room? Very good! Just catch hold of my horse, and I'll take her box to her at once!'

And, throwing the reins to the astonished butler, I ran off as fast as I could in search of his mistress.

Lady Poppington is decidedly a haughty dame, as proud as Lucifer, and as a rule not at all given to a display of emotion; but this sudden restoration of her beloved jewels was too much for her feelings. First of all she burst into tears, next she called me by my Christian name ('*I am* getting on nicely!' I thought to myself), finally finishing up by falling into my arms and fainting away.

'I've won the game now, I *think!*' said I to myself, as I deposited her ladyship on the sofa, and rang for assistance.

And so it proved, for I left Poppington Towers, late that afternoon, an engaged man. Yes! Lady Beatrice was mine at last, and all through the famous Poppington Pearls—bless 'em!

Note by the way: I have re-christened dear old Rory O'More Pearlfinder.

ROUND THE KISH AND BACK.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'



EADY about!'

'Ready all, sir!' came the call from the men forward.

'All ready below?'

'Ready all, sir!' was the quick response.

Then lee-helm round she comes, and the *Caubeen* sprung round on the heel of her keel like a top beautifully wound, and most artistically spun by some enthusiastic schoolboy. Quickly the jib and foresail filled, and she shot off again on the other tack as the water commenced to hiss and sputter, and then settle down into a steady stream in the lee scuppers.

Whilst those members of the crew who were on deck were exceedingly busy getting in, backing up, belaying, and trimming the sheets to a nicety, the members of Watch No. 2 were scarcely less active down below.

It was a broad reach round the Rosebeg buoy in Dublin Bay out to the Kish Light-ship in a very steady breeze of moderate strength, and the balloon topsail was aloft on what was recognised as the smartest cutter of the Royal Irish Yacht Club. She was sailing against the *Shamrock*, a boat of similar tonnage, and reputed to be a little stiffer when winds were above whole-sail strength. There was no lead on the keels in those days; but shifting ballast, now forbidden, was still allowed, and the hardest work done in a yacht when racing was under hatches.

The main cabin of the *Caubeen* at the time the above order was given by her steersman presented a truly wonderful sight. Three stout men in undershirts and trousers stood in the place generally occupied by the swing-table; below them, on the lee

side, were ranged a great long pile of bags of lead shot. Up to windward these were being heaved as if they were but bags of sawdust, the grey dust rising from them in clouds, and coating with a bluish-grey hue, suggestive of lead-poisoning, the sweat-profused faces of the hard workers. The last bag up to windward, they helped themselves to some ale from a jar, squeezed themselves up on top, and waited contentedly the next call of 'Ready about!'

It is fortunate for yacht-racing, and those who enjoy the pastime, that all this old galley-slave system of working is done away with. Although cabins are often gutted out and converted into sail lockers, at present there is no grimy, unpleasant work to be done beneath the deck. No doubt some anxious skippers make a point of getting anchors, chains, and other heavy gear over from the lee to the weather side to stiffen their boats a little, but shifting ballast, as we used to know it, is fortunately a thing of the past. And yet the elder Hereshoff (the father of the designer of the *Defender*) sailed for many years single-handed a small yacht, the ballast of which was shifted automatically, the weights being allowed to slip down by gravity from weather rail to lee rail previous to the helm being put hard down. The present rules of yacht-racing do not, however, allow of the shifting of dead ballast at all, and so, as illustrated in the *Defender's* races, a large, heavy crew of men were used as beef ballast to move from side to side in tacking, lie close up to the weather rail, give the benefit of their weight in making the boat carry her sail, and present as little of their carcass as possible to the atmosphere. It will be hard to prevent this custom, which, after all, is not a novel one, as our story will show.

'Ready about!' came the call again from Phil O'Brien, most astute of Dublin Bay yachtsmen. 'Ready!' again came the calls from forward and below, followed by the cry of 'Lee-oh!' and as the *Caubeen* went round to port tack to weather the Kish Light and run home, the *Shamrock* crossed under her stern, having virtually lost the race—for in running before the wind the latter, well sailed by Jack Corrigan of the Royal Cork, it was well known had no chance in such weather. The light-ship a-weather, the *Caubeen*, with mainboom squared away and balloon foresail (the spinnaker, as we know it now, had not been introduced then) was soon, with wind-dart aft, going home to Kingstown harbour, entering which she reached up to the Commodore ship and drew the winning gun, amidst loud cheers

of all on board, as the boat and its owner were great favourites with the members of all the yacht clubs.

The amateur members of the rival crews landed from the competing vessels at the Club House together. Who that has gone the Irish round of yachting can forget those club steps on Kingstown Regatta days, when crowded with all the female beauty for which Dublin is famous? If Cowes, indeed, claim to be the Ascot of yachting, then Kingston undoubtedly may lay claim to being the Goodwood. And what yachtsman who has ventured within the harbour walls can forget the hospitality of the place, where every burgee is respected, no matter whether it float at the masthead of a ten-ton cutter or a topsail schooner. Plenty of sailing, plenty of dancing, and an off-day trip in a car through the delightful grounds of Lord Powerscourt to the Dargle, make the Dublin Bay week one of the pleasantest of the yacht-racing season. Not that the Dublin yachtsmen are of that dandified order known as 'smelling salts,' for they will frequently thresh their boats through a gale of south-west wind and heavy sea when the Kingstown and Holyhead mail steamers are making very hard weather of it, and that in ten and twenty tonners.

'Well, Corrigan,' said O'Brien, with a triumphant twinkle in his eye, to the owner of the *Shamrock*, 'what do you think of the *Caubeen* now? Is she still the boat that wouldn't stand up to the waft of wind from the apron of an ould woman blowin' her fire?'

'An' sure and she wouldn't; and as to what I think of her, I think what I always thought of her.'

'And what may that be, John Corrigan?' said O'Brien, as fiery as if the latter had been speaking contemptuously of his lady love.

'That she's an ould lead mine, and if ye don't watch yourself, Phil O'Brien, it may be a *lead coffin* she'll prove in the end for you and the lot of yez. Call her a yacht, indade, with three strong men trimming shot-bags every tack, and niver wan o' them seeing the salt water from starting gun to finishing—and us having our whisky and wather at our table in the *Shamrock* all the time as if at our fireside!'

'And I suppose ye think it's the lead that does it?'

'Indeed and I do, for if ye did not shove your shot-bags up to windward, she would lay over till she drowned ye.'

'Troth, and it's sorry ye would be, Corrigan, to sec her keel

upwards and us all below. It would leave ye with all the plate to put in your locker this season, and divil the chance ye'll heve ov wan single mug as long as the *Caubeen* sails in the same way as she sailed to-day.'

'Seal down your ballast lockers, O'Brien, and I'll sail ye for a hundred guineas on Saturday next, blow high, blow low; first boat home to Commodore to win.'

'Say *two hunder*, Corrigan, and it's a match,' was the immediate response. 'Ye can plaster our cabin floor with saling-wax, and I'll let your ould bull-dog have the *Caubeen's* cabin for a kennel, if ye like.'

There were several quiet whispers of 'Don't lose yourself, Phil!' but Phil's cousin, one of the lead-shifters, murmured, 'Phil's an old riding man, and has not ridden over a score of steeple-chase winners without knowing what he's drivhin' at.'

'It's a bargain, O'Brien, and I'll hould ye to it. Mind ye, sealed-up cabin floors, once round Rosebeg and Kish to Commodore, blow high or blow low.'

That match was the talk of the table in every one of the Club dining-rooms at Kingstown. The news of it quickly travelled down to Dublin, and from Dublin it went out to every mess-room at the Curragh. 'Begorra,' said a well-known Colonel of Dragoons stationed there, 'I never sailed anything nearer a yacht than a plank on the old duck-pond at home in Roscommon, but I've rode many a good race agin' Phil O'Brien, and I'll back him anyhow. He's a funny sort ov a devil, and when he once had to put up a pound or so of extra weight in a chase for 100*l.* he stuck it in sovereigns in each side-pocket of his waistcoat, for, says he "I can ride a few pounds lighter with the money close to my heart."'

Men who understood something about naval architecture, and knew the lines of the *Caubeen*, spoke differently; they said she would turn turtle if ever O'Brien put a big topsail above her, and drown the lot. However, O'Brien thought somewhat in another and his own direction.

Saturday week seemed long of coming in the minds of the many keen sailors about Kingstown, who were anxious to see the much-talked of match. At last it came, and with it a hard, strong breeze from the south-west, which promised to freshen. 'It was *Shamrock's* day,' said every one, 'shot-bags or not.' But O'Brien did not seem in the least anxious. It was known that he had picked up a number of the heaviest yacht-

sailors in Kingstown as extra hands, also a lot of very smart little yachting apprentices and cabin boys. 'There will be more than one flag in the harbour half-mast high,' said one of the Club Secretaries, 'and that you'll see when the day's over.' Both boats were under single-reefed mainsails when the starting hour, eleven o'clock, approached; and it was noted that O'Brien, who was at the helm, wore a cork jacket, whilst every man on board had on life-belts. 'It's the ould O'Brien spirit,' said every one; 'he means to win, drown, or die, but it's good of him to put on the life-belts on his men.'

They started with the gun, bowsprit and bowsprit, and reached straight out of Kingstown harbour, after which they had a clean run before the wind to the Rosebeg buoy, the *Caubeen* in this part of the sailing taking the lead. When they hauled their wind, things were expected to prove somewhat different, and old hands said, 'The *Shamrock* will claw out on her now like a monkey laying out on the branch of a tree for a cocoa-nut.' But, curiously enough, they were disappointed, for the *Caubeen* under jib-headed topsail, and with cabin floors plastered with sealing-wax, stood strong up to her canvas, and laid a far higher winds. 'Has Phil stuck a lead keel on to her?' was the question amongst the many old salts who watched the race from the outer walls of Kingstown harbour. Tack and tack they went; sometimes lost in clouds of driving foam, even the Hill of Howth being half-obsured in driving haze. At length the *Caubeen* weathered the Kish, but only some forty-five seconds ahead of the Royal Cork champion. The wind in the meantime had backed more into the southward, and a strong hotly contested broad reach home was promised. Had not the mist interfered with the focus, those who were watching the approach of the competing vessels might have seen that *Caubeen's* crew were crowded hard upon the port side, a good round dozen in all. As she neared the Kingstown walls, *Shamrock* made a shot at her weather, but the luff that followed settled that, and she dropped back, and steering clear of a blanket made for to drive through her lee. Down came the *Caubeen's* jib-header, and up went the working square topsail, amidst such-like remarks, 'It's very game of ye, Phil, but she'll never carry it.' Still, to their astonishment, she stood as stiff as an oak-tree. Bit by bit they closed on Kingstown harbour, out of which the wind was blowing. At last they opened the gate, and *Caubeen* hauled her wind and fetched up to lay across the starting and finishing

line. *Shamrock*, with the tiller sorely pressed, hove about on her quarter, and in the second tack Phil O'Brien landed his boat a winner over the line, amidst ringing cheers from the hundreds on the harbour walls.

'How did she do it?' That was the question asked on all sides. The sticking-plaster on the cabin floor was found all right, and there had been no shifting of the ordinary ballast.

'Begorra,' said the club doctor, 'I don't know, but one of Phil's men got drunk coming ashore, and went to the bottom, life-belt and all; and we had to fish him up with a boat-hook—very far gone, too.'

'With a life-belt on, doctor?'

'Sure an' I don't know what you call a life-belt in Dublin; maybe, it's a sort o' bit o' ballast to kape a man from fallin' overboard. All I know is there were three stones of lead shot inside ov it.'

Corrigan got the *Shamrock* under way that night, feeling quite certain that anybody brought up in the Cork butter trade was no match for a hard-riding man who had been used to carrying weight over Baldoyle, Punchestown, and the Curragh.

THE WILD ENGLISH TURKEY.

By E. L. A.



CONSIDERATIONS of the enterprising poacher, and the occasionally troublesome friend, bind me over to secrecy regarding the exact location of the strange and unusual day's shooting recorded in this paper. Nevertheless, the wild turkey, which was the object of our pursuit, does exist in England, and instead of remaining in its present extremely limited numbers might well become abundant if a few enterprising owners of suitable lands would combine for that object.

It was a lovely October mid-day when I left Liverpool Street Station in company with an excellent sportsman, 'W.' we will call him, whose ancestors had owned and ruled their fair share of a northern shire for some five hundred years or so. Our gun-cases were in the racks overhead; a couple of setters, favoured

animals, whom their masters' affection and an indulgent guard constituted our companions for the moment, slept at our feet, while our travelling kit was on the seats beside us, and our faithful plaids tucked in across our knees, for the October afternoon was decidedly chilly, even within the murky warmth of the great city. We were taking a pair of trusted dogs with us because the shoot to which we were going was not a properly equipped manor, and, though it was of necessity preserved, it had neither kennels nor keepers of its own. We were taking luggage again because, in truth, we were travelling into the wilderness. 'Just as much as if we were going after brush turkeys in their native homes in the shadow of the Chesapeake pine-forests,' my host observed. Well! pleasant company, good cigars, and the prospect of exciting sport on the morrow make a long journey easy, and in something over two hours from leaving London we turned out at the quietest little wayside station that ever deserved that name. There was a suspicion of sea-salt in the clean fresh air that saluted us as we descended, and something more than a breath of rosin and aromatic essences in the scent of those pine-woods that stretched away ragged and picturesque on three sides of the outlook. I had scarcely time to note so much, and that the station-master's cabbages suggested the mellow sandy soil was richer than it seemed, when a stalwart east-country bailiff, blue-eyed and fair-haired, relieved me of my gun-case, and led the way down the moss-grown steps to where, in the quiet country road outside, W.'s dog-cart was waiting for him.

We were soon bowling over roads that I must, in fairness, confess spoke a good word for the local County Council, even if that good word was the only one they ever earned; my host mingling, as we went, archæology and agriculture, tenants' rights and landlords' wrongs, as he pointed out objects of interest or discussion with the point of his whip now on one hand and now on the other. Of course I asked him about the birds we had come to see, these bulky wild-fowl, which English sportsmen have so strangely neglected, but he was not able to tell me very much. The birds had been imported, probably as eggs, a generation or two back from the Atlantic coast, where they were then far more abundant than now. They had thriven fairly well, at one time abundant and at another time scarce, just as the capercailzie varied at the time of its re-introduction to Scotland, and then for fifty years or so the

birds seem to have been almost overlooked by a lord of the manor in whom sporting instincts were not highly developed. Interbreeding, it was thought, to some small extent with the domestic turkeys along the outskirts of the region inhabited, they assimilated themselves so thoroughly to their surroundings that by the time the forest came into W.'s hands there were probably two or three hundred of them, multiplying slowly, and completely independent of external care. 'What sort of game birds they make you shall shortly judge of for yourself,' my host said, and soon after the pine-woods swallowed us completely up, and we had come into an undisputed landlord's land, where no tenants existed or desired to exist, a land of purple woods lit now and then by square patches of blue sky overhead amongst the close-locked branches, a place of sandy gulches and ferny thickets, with ever and anon a willow covert, or a bit of bog gleaming sapphire and red in its autumn livery of strange half-withered plants and rushes.

Five miles—and miles are long in this part of the world—brought us late in the afternoon down a steep pitch to the trim porch of a regular woodman's cottage, a rough but charming shelter in the heart of the forest, with roses still in bloom up to its deep-thatched eaves, and a twinkle of welcome fire-light coming in the dusk from behind its deep-set, diamond-paned windows. Here we put up for the night, with accommodation of the cleanest and simplest, and after a substantial supper went to bed early, for there was some hard work to be done to-morrow. As I took a final look out of my window, before putting the candles out, a fox was barking to his companions somewhere away in the still distance, the wind was whispering gently in the tree-tops, and the white and black shadows of the moonlight on the ground completed a picture that was far more in keeping with an American backwood than a homely English shire a few short hours from the great metropolis.

The next morning was ushered in by a dense white mist, so close and clinging that the green wicket-gate at the bottom of the little rose-fringed path leading from our door could not be seen from the porch. Here was a nice state of things, and W.'s face and my own were somewhat long as we met in the sitting-room. However, we kept repeating for each other's comfort during a hasty breakfast that it *was* white, and this particular kind of fog is never known to last long, a prophecy which the Fates very

handsomely fulfilled. By the time we had got our guns, and were marching down a sandy road at the head of a gang of fifteen or twenty woodcutters and forest reeves, collected from all parts of W.'s territory, the vapour was visibly thinner, and the tallest trees were presently gleaming through it, their tops glittering like golden spires in the sunshine.

The head man's plans were the tactics of the backwoods. There being no regular drives in the forest, he had decided to take advantage of every chance opening, and work his beaters to and fro down the narrowest breadths of woodlands known to be the favourite feeding-places of the turkeys we hoped to meet with.

No men but these russet-coated reeves, who knew every inch of the woods as well as a Londoner knows his Piccadilly, could have kept together or done the work expected of them on such a morning; but these yellow-haired Angles, with the smell of the pine-woods in their velveteens, and old-world words of Danish ancestors still lingering in their speech, were more than equal to it. They slipped away at the first covert with orders to beat down in a silent crescent upon us, the guns; and, after giving them five minutes' grace, W. and myself, with the keeper as guide, struck out into the open, where we took up positions about a hundred yards apart on the edge of a tongue of forest running out into a boggy track of a few acres in extent, dotted with willow bushes and rough with great hassocks of withered hummock grass.

A more charming silvery grey morning, I decided, as I sat on a soft hummock of grass, or one that lent itself more kindly to the delusion that we were far beyond the confines of civilisation, there could not have been.

The grey mist had been attenuated out into opalescence by a soft breeze overhead, and was lying lawn-like and vapoury in the hollows behind the pine-covered ridges that lifted above it here and there. Under this thin veil the undergrowth and herbage was developing as the light brightened, every twig hung with the delicate beaded work that the dew puts upon the accumulated spiders' webs of bygone summer months; the pools mirror-like and quiescent; the low herbage and crimson felted mosses over the damp places, as varied in colour as a Kurdish tapestry, glossy and sparkling with iridescent moisture; the red spikes tipping the green wands of the osiers were piercing through the vapour in the hollows, and the compact

heads of the hawthorns showing like rounded islands in that still grey sea. Somewhere to the left was an enterprising linnet twittering on a spray that rose mysterious and stemless from a sheet of whiteness, and a woodpecker was rattling his blows with inconceivable rapidity on a dead trunk in a distant coppice, but otherwise all was gloriously still and silent. I had hardly said so to myself, and was removing the small end of a second cigar, when straight in front, with a flutter and crash into the daylight, from a bush not ten yards in front rose a cock pheasant, sparkling in gold and red plumage as the sunlight gleamed down his enamelled back. I instinctively dropped W.'s irreproachable Havana, and covered him with my gun, but lowered it again without firing, for there were, or, at least, it was to be hoped there were, better things to come from the coverts whence he had sprung. Then a hare came out, and stopped on the sunny bank to scratch his ears with a long back leg, and, looking as though he were in no very good frame of mind at being turned out of his snug form of dead beech-leaves at such an unreasonable hour, flopped into the tussock grass, and went on his way unharmed.

But where were the turkeys? Already the beat was all but over, the men on the horns of the crescent line had already come out of the thickets and were waiting for the centre to close, we had just given up hope of any big birds this turn, when there was a sudden shout back in the woods, a waving of fir-branches about half-way down between myself and my host, and out into the mist came hurtling three ponderous black objects with a tremendous uproar of wings and cackling. There is nothing I can compare the turkey to when fairly launched but a cock capercailzie, and even that splendid Scotch game-bird is less in size than the least of those vast things which, with short rounded wings spread wide, and legs tucked up tight beneath them, shot down upon us from the trees. W., who was standing a little deeper in the fog than myself, missed altogether, and in the excitement of the moment I am ashamed to say I did the same with the right barrel, but the left told. I saw the last of the three birds swerve as he disappeared into the mist, and the moment after there was a hollow resounding thump on the damp ground in the direction he had taken. We hurried up, and upon the ground was a splendid bird very much the same size as one of his domesticated kindred, but more 'gamy' in shape: his plumage of glossy black, with bronze and green

lights upon it ; his wing feathers tipped with white ; his tail barred with black and white—in fact, altogether as handsome a bird as ever fell to a charge of ‘No 5,’ and of course we then and there drank enthusiastically to him and his kind.

From this point, as there was a certain amount of difficulty in working the next round as a beat, it was decided we should walk with the line for half a mile or so. ‘Fire at anything,’ said W. to me, as we picked up our guns and turned into the woods ; ‘these turkeys are addle-headed beasts, a little noise completely puts them off the small amount of strategy they can boast of!’ So, nothing loath, I took up my place, and was soon stalking through the most charming glades of birch and pine, with a deep carpet of brown fir-needles underfoot, and hollows full of piled grey rocks half hidden in withered ferns on either side. And first I shot an incautious rabbit bolting across the open, and then a wood-pigeon that burst with the hard metallic wing-flapping of his kind from an ivy-covered stem. A little further on something got up with a rustle from a patch of long wood grass and dead leaves, and firing hastily I got the first wood-cock of the season. Even while admiring him with that pardonable pride which the most modest of sportsmen will feel at such a moment, the keeper had stopped the line of beaters with a whistle, and coming up to me said there was a herd of turkeys running in front and a little further on a steep ‘scar,’ whence we might get them to break cover. ‘Would I join W. in the open?’

The three of us set off as hard as we could go over some remarkably rough ground, presently finding ourselves breathless but expectant at the foot of a sheer cliff, thirty or forty feet in height, and crowned by a tangled mass of fir-trees, standing out against the sky at every possible angle. Ten minutes’ waiting here produced a few pheasants and wood-pigeons, and then my eye caught something unusual happening in a bare pine-tree over W.’s stand, but hidden from his view by a mass of rock and tangled vegetation. I looked closely, and saw at least a dozen turkeys hopping with ludicrous solemnity up from branch to branch of that withered stem. Directly the first one had got to a sufficient vantage-point he precipitated himself off into space, and was immediately followed by the next, and the next one after him ! It was so funny to see those sage birds mounting from branch to branch and plunging off from the summit like divers from a diving-board that a right and left from W.’s gun

hardly recalled me to my gravity. But in a minute my own turn had come, and I was sober enough; for a smaller herd had put in an appearance close to where I was, and if you can picture an ostrich-farm on the wing, half a score lumbering black comets hurtling down the wind at an unknown number of miles per minute, croaking as they came, with wings that made a sound something like that attributed to the fabulous Roc, you will have some idea of my impressions at the moment. Out of those two parties we got five birds, the drive being the most productive, as it was the most picturesque, of the day.

The one bad quality of these giants of their kind from a sportsman's point of view is that they are instinctively addicted to running, and consequently difficult to get upon the wing; but this is a fault they share in common with the pheasant, which, it need not be pointed out, will traverse half a mile of covert on foot until he comes to the hedge, or net, and is absolutely obliged to fly. A good point of the wild turkey is that when he does get up he generally affords a fair shot, and is not readily mistaken for anything else! I will not attempt to narrate separately each drive we had that day, or to retail the curious scraps of information about these almost unknown game-birds I got from the reeves as we sat at our noon-day lunch in the green arcades of the pine-trees, with ridge on ridge of woodlands stretching out before us to the very edge of the purple sea in the distance. Our bag was comparatively small; it would not have stocked a poulterer's shop for a week at Christmas time; but when we counted out the spoil—fourteen turkeys, eight pheasants, three hares, and half a dozen various—on the grass plot before our woodman's hut that afternoon, I was well content, and had seen enough to convince me that our English naturalists have been negligent, and our great game perservers have somehow overlooked one of the hardest and most handsome of game-birds that ever fell to a sportsman's gun.

GIVING HIM A LESSON.

By U. B. C. M.

IT was guest-night at the mess of the Wessex Regiment, and the chief topic of conversation, naturally enough, was the Hunt Point-to-Point Race, due to come off in a fortnight's time. Probable entries were discussed, the merits of horses and riders pretty freely criticised, and a few bets made on the event. One of those who appeared most interested in this discussion was young Arthur Danbury, clerk in Hawke & Bagshott's bank, guest of one of the young subs., his former schoolfellow at Eton in the palmy days before unlucky speculations had ruined his father, necessitating the sale of the family property—a blow so keenly felt by the old squire that he died before the sale took place. His son was glad enough to accept the berth offered him by his father's friend, the senior partner, and was now pluckily making the best of circumstances, working hard at the business, though it cannot be said that he found it very congenial occupation. He listened eagerly, but took little part in the conversation till directly appealed to by his friend Jervis for information as to some details of the country over which the race was to be run. Arthur was able to describe it pretty well, having run in paper-chases two or three times in this particular direction.

'You seem to know the country pretty well, and yet I don't remember having seen you out with hounds, Mr.—a—Danbury,' said his opposite neighbour, Major Bruton, a disagreeable-looking man with a very supercilious manner. He put up his eye-glass as he spoke, and stared at Arthur as if he had only just become aware of his existence.

The lad coloured up under his scrutiny, but answered quietly, 'Unluckily, there isn't any chance of hunting for me now, and my knowledge of the country is confined to what I can see of it on foot.'

'Ah! of course, I ought to have remembered that hunting is considered rather an expensive amusement; stupid of me to have mentioned it. I ought to have remembered that you were not likely to be able to keep a horse—or to ride one either, most likely,' he added, with an unpleasant laugh.



My Beep.

6 o'clock exercise.

'I can generally stick on somehow,' returned Arthur, nettled at the older man's impertinence.

'Oh, glory! you've put your foot in it,' muttered Jervis, as a suppressed titter followed Arthur's words, for the Major was a very indifferent horseman, and had been ignominiously unseated on parade only that very morning.

'Infernal young cub!' growled the Major to himself, furious at having the tables thus turned upon him; 'he wants a lesson, and, by Jove! he has come to the right place for it.'

'If that's the case, how would you like a mount for the race?' he asked, after a moment's pause, to the unmitigated surprise of his hearers.

'Like a mount!' echoed Arthur; 'I only wish I had a chance of such a piece of luck!'

'Well, I was going to enter a horse for the good of the funds; but I have not thought of a rider yet. I can't do the weight myself, but if you can manage that, Drummer Boy is as good as many of the others, anyhow.'

Every one stared at such extraordinary affability from the Major; he had hardly ever been known to offer any one a mount before, though he kept half a dozen horses and rarely used them. It was generally said of him that he never did any one a good turn, unless he saw his way to making something out of it, and what return could he expect from young Danbury? He put aside the boy's eager thanks, merely saying that they would make necessary arrangements later, adding as an after-thought, 'Of course you have got the necessary kit?'

Arthur's face fell; even if anything of the kind remained in his wardrobe, what was made two years ago would be useless now. His slender salary would only suffice with the most rigid economy, and such an extravagance as the purchase of boots and breeches was not to be thought of; but, before he could stammer out a negative, his friend Jervis had answered for him.

'Of course, he hasn't got a thin coat, and he'll have to ride in one to get down to the weight; but mine will just fit him, so that's all right,' he ended, with a vigorous kick under the table to keep Arthur from speaking.

'It may be all right,' he said later on, as the two sat together discussing the Major's offer; 'but I never knew the 'Razor' do any one a good turn yet, and when he shows his teeth with that beastly laugh of his he means mischief, as we all know to our cost.'

‘But what harm can he do me?’ urged Arthur; ‘you say his horses are good enough, and they are bound to be well-mannered or they wouldn’t suit him. If I come to grief it’s my own fault and not his; the worst fellow must have some good in him, and it’s good enough for me to get a mount, that’s all I can say.’

‘Maybe, but I don’t like it,’ said Jervis, uneasily; ‘anyhow, I shall keep my eyes and ears open, and let you know at once if I can make anything out of it.’

Apparently, however, there was nothing to be discovered. The days passed on. Arthur got up at six o’clock a couple of times to give the horse a gallop and get to know something of him, at the Major’s suggestion. The horse, duly entered, with Arthur’s name as rider, was fit and well. Old Hawke had given a kindly consent to the lad’s nervous request for the necessary holiday, and everything looked smooth and serene.

The eventful day arrived. Arthur had breakfasted at the barracks with Jervis, who had carefully superintended his toilet, and they drove off together to the scene of the races, some eight miles from the town. Arthur was full of excitement; he had been round to the stables and heard an excellent report of Drummer Boy, who had already gone on. The day was fine, the going ought to be pretty nearly perfect, and he meant, as he said, to have a good look-in for the Cup. Jervis listened, but still could not refrain from expressing doubts of the Major’s conduct.

‘He’ll be late if he don’t look sharp,’ he said. ‘Lazy beggar, his blinds weren’t up when we started, and he’s not the man to hurry either his dressing or his feeding; thinks a jolly sight too much of both for that.’

Arrived on the ground, Arthur’s first object was to find his horse; but it was some time before he obtained the information that the animal had been put up at an inn a couple of miles back, where the groom said he had been ordered to wait for his master.

‘Time is getting on; you had better send my man down to hurry him up a bit,’ said the good-natured Jervis. ‘We will go round and have a look at the other gees, and find out what is being said of Drummer Boy’s chance.’

This was sufficiently interesting an occupation to pass the time quite pleasantly till Jervis’s groom came back again with a very disturbed expression on his face.

'Beg pardon, sir,' he said, touching his hat to Arthur ; 'but the Major's man said he durstn't come on till his master comes ; he'd got his orders very stiff, and it was as much as his place was worth to disobey them. I couldn't persuade him to move, though I told him time was a runnin' short.'

Jervis gave a low whistle of dismay. 'Here, jump on to the pony and go down yourself, and you must ride like blazes, too, old man, or you won't get back in time. I knew he meant mischief,' he added, as Arthur tore off in the direction of the inn, 'but of all mean, dirty tricks, this beats the lot.'

At the stable door stood Bruton's groom, placidly smoking a short clay pipe, as he leaned against the doorpost, and he hardly vouchsafed to take any notice as Arthur galloped up, exclaiming, 'What are you about, Smith? Get the Drummer Boy out as sharp as you can. Do you know they are just weighing in, and I don't know now if I can get back in time?'

'Very likely not,' said Smith, imperturbably, without making any attempt to move.

'But—confound it, Smith !—you know as well as I do that I am riding Drummer Boy for Major Bruton.'

'Beg pardon, sir,' interrupted Smith, with a grin ; 'I know my master's orders a sight better than you do, and I have got to stay here with the horse till he comes or sends for him hisself.'

'Well, but if he is late, or prevented from coming ; there's no sign of him down the road yet, for I looked from the top of the hill as I came down.'

'Likely enough he went the other way and won't pass by here at all. Anyhow, I may as well feed and water the horse, for he's not wanted for this job, that's certain.'

It was evidently useless attempting to argue with the fellow, or to resent his cool impertinence. Smith was not his servant, so Arthur only replied coldly, as he turned away, 'You will have to answer for this to the Major.'

'Thank you, sir. Don't trouble yourself about me ;—but it is a nasty sell for you, all the same,' he added to himself, as Arthur rode away.

Sure enough, Major Bruton had come by the other road, and was about the first person Arthur caught sight of as, white with excitement and disappointment, he galloped Jervis's long-suffering pony up to the course, where the starter's flag was falling at that very moment. 'I am afraid there has been some extraordinary mistake, Major Bruton,' he said, flinging the reins to

Jervis's groom, and coming up to the Major's cart. 'Your man says that he had orders not to bring out Drummer Boy till you came or sent for him.'

Major Bruton waited to watch the horses over the next fence, then slowly putting down his field-glasses he turned to Arthur with his usual unpleasant smile. 'Smith is not in the habit of making mistakes, Mr. Danbury,' he said, deliberately, and so distinctly that every one near could hear every word he said. 'He has been with me some years now, and long enough to know that I must have been mad or drunk when I offered a mount on Drummer Boy to a young counter-jumper like you.'

Arthur's eyes blazed at the insulting words, and for one wild moment his impulse was to drag the Major from the cart and give him a sound horsewhipping; but with a violent effort he controlled his voice sufficiently to answer as clearly as the Major himself, 'No doubt, since he has been with you so long he has reason to know your normal condition better than I do.'

A burst of hearty laughter behind him, followed by a heavy hand clapped on his shoulder, made him turn hastily round to find a jolly old farmer in huge delight at the rage with which Bruton's face was convulsed at Arthur's retort, and the evident satisfaction with which the bystanders received it. 'Well done, Master Arthur! well said—you had him well there!' exclaimed the old fellow.

'Why, Pomeroy; you here!' returned Arthur, cordially, recognising one of the old tenants, and heartily shaking the powerful fist held out to him. 'I am glad to see you.'

'And I to see you, sir, and for more reasons than one, as I'll tell you directly. Look here,' continued Pomeroy, putting his hand on Arthur's arm and drawing him a little away from the crowd; 'I've got a little mare here that's bound to win the Farmer's Cup if she will only go the right way to work, and I don't know any one so likely to persuade her to it as yourself. I can't ride her, as, you see, my racing days are over,' and Pomeroy looked down at his broad waistcoat and stalwart limbs with a jolly laugh. 'My fool of a nephew that I put up to ride her is no more use than a flea on a fiddle; but if only you will undertake the job, I shall have the best chance I can.'

'Of course I'll ride her, and only too delighted,' said Arthur, his face beaming and his late disappointment forgotten.

'Then come along and have a look at the mare and get into your colours; there's no time to spare,' said Pomeroy, as a shout

from the crowd announced that the leading horses were in sight. He hurried Arthur to some farm buildings adjoining the field, and a sharp whistle brought a boy running out.

'I've got her here in the barn, master ; the stable is too full to be safe for her,' and, diving round a corner, he showed the way to where Arthur's new mount was standing.

'Are you sure that your nephew doesn't care to ride?' he asked, finding a young fellow about his own age standing outside all ready in silk and breeches.

'Disappointed? Bless your soul, Jem, there, is only too thankful to think that his precious neck is safe for this journey,' and the look of evident relief which passed over Jem's face went far to corroborate his words.

The mare was a long, low, Irish-bred one, with a restless eye and switching tail, and there was not much doubt in looking at her that it might very probably be a case of whether her ladyship would or no.

'There's legs for you, and there's quarters,' said Pomeroy, running his hand over her, and feeling the muscles that stood out like cords under her fine glossy coat. 'If I can't ride them now, I have not forgotten how to train them, and I know a good one still when I see it. Will you ride her, sir?'

'I should think I would,' said Arthur, running his eye admiringly over the little mare. 'But surely,' he added, quickly, 'not with that curb on her? She doesn't look as if she would stand much handling with that.'

'That's your doing, you blunder-headed idiot,' growled Pomeroy to his nephew, who was hurriedly helping Arthur into the blue-and-white-quartered jacket he had just quitted. 'No, no,' he said, as, after giving the boy orders to change the bridle and bring the mare up to the weighing-tent, he went off with Arthur to get the weights settled. 'I've only one piece of advice to give you, and that is ——'

'I know it,' laughed Arthur. 'I have not forgotten my first day's hunting on the old white pony, and your caution as we came up to the first ditch, "Sit still, sir ; sit still!" and how I followed your advice by sitting hard and fast in the mud at the bottom, while the pony stopped on the edge and looked at me.'

'Well you both learned to jump, and to jump together, pretty soon,' said Pomeroy, chuckling at the recollection. 'But now hurry in, for you are the last as it is.'

A hasty inspection of girths and the altered bridle and Arthur is up, with Pomeroy walking beside him to the starting-point, till a block in front forced them to stop for a minute, close to Major Bruton's cart, as luck would have it.

'Hullo, Pomeroy!' exclaimed that worthy. 'I should have doubled my little bet with you, if I had known that you had only the banker's clerk to ride for you. Pity, for your mare looks very well, except a trifle light here,' letting his whip fall lightly on her quarters as if to indicate what he meant. The tickling lash was quite enough to rouse the mare's irritable temper, and she forthwith indulged in a series of kicks and plunges that pretty well tested the truth of Arthur's assertion that he could stick on.

'Darn you! keep your whip off my mare,' roared Pomeroy. 'The banker's clerk is good enough to win my money, anyhow; and, if it comes to that, I should like to know which has most of the counter-jumper about him, yon lad that they trust to shovel out the gold and silver at the bank, or the boy they couldn't trust to carry home the sugar-bags from his father's shop, because he couldn't keep his dirty fingers out of them. I know you well enough, and knew your father before you—old Burton of Tynefield, before he came into a fortune and changed his name, and got too grand for the place and the people.'

Major Bruton's face was livid with rage as the bystanders roared at the old farmer's words; even his own groom, standing at the horse's head, was shaking with ill-suppressed laughter.

He gave his horse a savage cut, letting the lash fall across the groom's face with a sting that quickly stopped his laughter.

Arthur had considerable difficulty in getting the mare to face the starter's flag properly, and she rushed madly down at the first fence in a style that threatened considerable danger to herself and her rider. However, with a crash and a flounder it was safely left behind, and, keeping very quiet, with hands low, just feeling the mare's mouth, but interfering as little as possible, Arthur finds the mare's irritable temper gradually cooling down, and though jumping rather wild for the next couple of fences, she gradually settled down, and her long free stride and the feeling of power behind at the jumps, began to inspire him with a good deal of confidence. Half-way, and round the flag, a good number of the field disposed of; three or four holding their own well, and one, a big bay horse on the left, looking a dangerous customer. The little mare had plenty



Keep your whips off my mare

J. B. P.

left in her, and was game enough ; but it would be a hard matter to keep clear of the bay, which was ridden, too, by a man Arthur knew by reputation as a first-rate gentleman rider. Down at the bottom of the last field but one was a very wide brook with nasty rotten-looking banks, and in the previous race most of the competitors had elected to take it some way out on the right, where the brook was narrower and the banks sounder ; but, at the same time, half the field beyond was soft and deep in places, and bound to take a good deal out of a horse. The few who had kept to the straightest line had one and all got in, and the bay's rider was evidently warned by their fate, and already bending out towards the right side of the meadow. Now, Arthur had been over this brook the last time he ran in a paper-chase, and knew that just at its very widest there was one place where the bank was a good deal sounder than it looked. The question was, would the mare face it? could she clear it? If so, she would not only have a clear lead, but escape the boggy places. The bay, still held, was increasing his lead.

'Now or never,' said Arthur, and turned the mare to the left. She promptly showed her resentment by laying back her ears and shaking her head ; the long, easy swing changed into a shifting, uneasy gallop. Would she stop?—if so, the race was lost. With a desperate effort, mindful of old Pomeroy's last words, Arthur controlled the impulse to catch her by the head and drive her at it ; sitting absolutely still and just keeping her head in the right direction. Her stride grew shorter ; still, Arthur never moved. For the first time she seemed to catch sight of the water, half stopped on the very brink, and then, as no one was urging her to jump it, concluded she would best show her independence by going over. It wanted all the pace you could get to land clear, and the hesitation had been nearly fatal ; her blood was up now, and she meant to have it. With a quick snatch at the bit she flew into the air, her hind legs dropped, but with a desperate struggle and plunge she just saved herself and rolled over into the field.

Horse and rider lay for a few seconds half stunned by the fall ; but Arthur was up and dragging the mare to her feet almost before he knew what had happened. The bay was only now rising at the brook on the right, and the boggy ground was still before him. The mare had been somewhat steadied by the fall, and this time gave in to her rider's wishes. Easied for a few seconds, which Arthur ventured to give her, she got her

wind back a bit, and by the time the bay had gallantly ploughed through the deep bottom she was two lengths to the good, and the bay had not reduced the distance much when they passed the winning-post.

Old Pomeroy was half mad with excitement, and Arthur's hand was nearly shaken off by a crowd of hearty admirers of the mare and her trainer, most of whom had landed a neat little sum by her popular win.

More than all, Pomeroy chuckled over the Major's discomfiture at the loss of his bet and the counter-jumper's success. 'Just tell Major Burton, or Bruton, or whatever he likes to call himself,' he said to Jervis, who had hurried up to congratulate him and Arthur, 'I am ready to meet his Drummer Boy in a match against my Nora here, provided Master Arthur will ride her for me, in the Hunt races, and I will lay any odds he likes upon my chance.'

But before the day of those races the Major had deemed it advisable to send in his papers and leave the Wessex, to the unmitigated delight of every officer and man in the regiment.

AN UNEXPECTED BAG.

By 'RELLIM.'



HERE did you say the place is, Tom ?'

'Oh, somewhere up in the wilds of Kincardineshire, I believe. Laurencekirk or some similarly named ecclesiastical edifice is the terminus, I understand ; then a drive of twenty-five miles or so along the coast deposits us at our destination. It's certainly far enough out of the way, and I'm afraid the society will not be particularly choice ; but, *que voulez-vous ?* I did not manage to get on 'Arlington,' like you lucky dogs did, and as Glenshane has just come into my possession, we may as well see what it's like. Old Donald, the steward, writes me the house is in habitable condition, and that the moors are in perfect form ; so I vote we go up by the night mail on Sunday. What do you say, Grahame ?'

'Yours to command, my boy,' lazily drawled the Hon. Percy Grahame, thus appealed to ; 'only I stipulate for an entire absence of the feminine gender.'

'Why, Percy, what has happened? You're not about to figure in the law courts, are you?'

'Leave the poor lad alone, Jack,' put in Captain Melvill. 'He pinned his youthful affections to Miss Dollar for the Cup a few years back, and has been inconsolable since she threw him over. We'll soon put him to rights when once we get him among the heather.'

'Now if you two fellows incline to a stroll before dinner, I'm with you.' So saying, the three friends left the Captain's rooms in St. James's Street, where this conversation had taken place, and proceeded westwards along Piccadilly to the park.

* * * * *

The red sun was sinking rapidly behind the distant Grampians, as Captain Melvill and his two friends alighted at Glenshane, eager, as true sportsmen must always be, to renew their acquaintance with the 'bonnie brown birdies' that form so important an element of social interest at this season of the year. Situated picturesquely beside a quiet mountain burn, the verandah, which ran round the house above the first story, and the upper windows commanding a magnificent panorama of the undulating coast-line, the lodge was certainly entitled to the admiring glances bestowed upon it by its new occupants, and formed, indeed, an excellent centre from which to carry forward the campaign against 'St. Grouse.'

After doing full justice to the fare provided by Old Donald, the three friends strolled through the grounds to inspect the kennels and discuss the prospect of the morrow's sport. Returning to the lodge with the approach of darkness, the remainder of the evening passed in an agreeable manner over a friendly pool, and an early move was made to bed.

The Twelfth proved to be a glorious morning. Who that has experienced the invigorating, yet withal innocent delights incident to the opening of the shooting season, would exchange them for the gayest assembly in Mayfair, or the most attractive card ever put forward by a race committee. Certainly, Lieutenants Grahame and Beaumont were of this opinion as they joined their host in the breakfast-room on the morning after their arrival at Glenshane.

'Upon my word, Melvill, I'd willingly hand over what I picked up at Kempton for a snug little place like this,' said Beaumont.

'Everything seems so well arranged, too, and in excellent

preservation,' put in Grahame. 'I thought your late uncle was an invalid.'

'So he was, latterly,' rejoined the Captain; 'but he always kept this place in first-rate order, I suppose with the hope of being able to come north again at some time or other. Ah, here comes Donald with the trout.'

'You're a bit of a shot yourself, I presume, Donald?' said the Hon. Percy to that ancient Highland retainer.

'Weel, gentlemen, a ken a bit grouse when a rise anc, but the troot is mair in ma line.'

'Pretty dull in winter, isn't it, Donald?' said his master.

'Aye, sir, it's quiet enugh, but we're main comfortable, and hae nae cause o' complaint tae speak o', unless mebbe it's the Bogle.'

'The what, Donald?' chimed in the others simultaneously.

'Jist the Bogle o' Drumshane, gentlemen, an' naethin' else.'

'Why, you don't mean to say that a sensible man like yourself believes in any such trash in these matter-of-fact times?' laughed the Captain. 'I'm ashamed of you, man.'

'Weel, sir,' responded the injured Donald; 'a kenna whether it's trash, or what it is rightly, but a hae seen't ower mony times tae disbelieve it athegither.'

Despite the united efforts of the trio, Old Donald resolutely refused to be pumped of any information, except that at certain times in early autumn, and at intervals throughout the winter, the Bogle of Drumshane made its appearance at an old tower half a mile from the sea-coast, and within view of the lodge windows; that its presence was invariably heralded by the appearance of a faint grey light, which flitted round about the old keep, and that none of the inhabitants of Glenshane or the surrounding cottages would venture to approach within a mile or two of its dread presence.

'Come along, boys,' cried Captain Melvill; 'we have more substantial sport on hand than the trapping of itinerant spirits,' and he led the way to the kennels.

* * * * *

Bang! bang! went the guns, accompanied by a running chorus from the wings of the birds—the most delightful of music, and the bright hillside for a concert hall! Beaumont, the ever lucky, got the first covey and profited accordingly, but before the day was over each of these ardent sportsmen had shot his fill, and the joint bag realised the handsome result of

over a hundred brace. Favoured by the glorious weather, Captain Melvill and his visitors took full advantage of the splendid nature of the shooting, and great was the slaughter among the unoffending birds.

Returning somewhat later than usual one evening, having considerably extended their range that day and with gratifying results, after-dinner cigars were in progress of combustion on the verandah, when Old Donald noiselessly made his appearance, and, with a curious blending of triumph and affright in his manner, informed the Captain that the 'bogle' had recommenced operations for the season, and that its presence might now be discerned from an upper window.

A simultaneous rush to the point of vantage in question discovered the existence of a faint light, moving slowly to and fro some distance off in the direction of the tower of Drumshane, and an equally prompt and unanimous decision was arrived at, to investigate the mystery, and lay the spirit. Provided severally with a stout walking stick, as an aid to locomotion on the difficult ground, and as a possible assistant in argument with the bogle should they come to speaking terms, the three friends sallied forth, highly pleased with the prospect of something approaching to the nature of an adventure.

Pushing their way through the firs and bracken that clothed the side of the hill, they quickly reached its summit, and obtained a nearer view of the object of their attentions. Here it was necessary to proceed with more caution, as it was deemed advisable to give as little intimation as possible of their approach. Luckily, what wind there was blew towards them, and the discoverers were thus enabled to reach the shelter of an old stone dyke surrounding the keep, tolerably certain of their presence being so far unsuspected. From this point of view the appearance of the bogle was perfectly distinguishable. A tall, grey figure, clad in loose folds, whose head, fully seven feet from the ground, emitted the light they had seen from the lodge.

'By Jove!' whispered the Hon. Percy; 'he's a stunner.'

'I vote we jump the dyke when he turns the corner, and meet him on his next round,' suggested Beaumont.

'Agreed,' said Melvill; 'but no violence unless we're attacked. 'Ready? Now then!'

Scrambling over the low dyke, the three friends made for the corner of the old tower, round which the apparition was

expected to appear, and placed themselves right in its path. They had not long to wait. In a few seconds its tramp was audible as it turned the last corner before coming into view, and the next minute the bogle swung round upon them, illumining the walls of the mouldy old keep, and the dauntless three in its shadow. Suddenly a loud shriek rang through the air, there was a crash of broken glass, and the light disappeared.

'Great guns!' exclaimed Grahame, rushing up to the fallen spirit; 'it's —— Yes, by Jove! it's a woman, and, 'pon honour, she's fainted.'

'By Jove!' cried Beaumont, 'Percy's right. Here you two fellows, trot up some water, one of you, while I chafe her hands and temples.'

The water was quickly brought, and applied with such good effect that in a few minutes the pseudo-bogle revived sufficiently to sit up and exclaim, 'Oh! whatever shall I do? How could you be so unkind as not to give me some warning of your approach?' Then, suddenly perceiving that the unwelcome intruders were gentlemen and strangers, 'Oh, I feel so much ashamed! I never felt so frightened in my life. What will the boys say? Oh, I must go home!'

'We are exceedingly sorry to have caused you such alarm,' said Melvill; 'but, the fact is, we came over from the lodge to investigate the nature of the bogle, which, I may say,' he added, 'has been the cause of considerable alarm to the people round about.'

'Stupid people! Of course, we meant them to be frightened,' said the young lady, for such she evidently was; 'and we thought this the best plan to keep them from prying. Oh, here come the boys! I am so glad.'

The boys, who thus opportunely presented themselves, proved to be three young gentlemen farmers from an adjacent house, and brothers of the heroic young lady who had so spiritedly played the part of bogle. Not a little astonished were they to find their beacon off duty and conversing amicably with three strangers.

Mutual explanations and apologies followed, and the guardsmen learned, to their amusement and surprise, that the young men had availed themselves of an ancient tradition to enable them to convey in secrecy to the coast, by means of a subterranean passage from the old tower, the game which their land afforded, which they thence dispatched south into the London

market. Their pride revolting from a general knowledge of their penury becoming spread, and the money thus obtained being a serious consideration, they had adopted the expedient which had so alarmed Old Donald and his cronies.

Needless to state, the gentlemen promised the strictest secrecy in the matter, but it is quite upon the cards that in the near future the position of Bogle of Drumshane may be advertised as vacant in the *Times*, simultaneously with the announcement of the wedding of Lieutenant the Hon. Percy Grahame.

BROKEN LINKS.

By C. G. PAPILLON.

*'I have lived my life—I am nearly done ;
I have played the game all round.'*—WHYTE MELVILLE.



HE air is sweet with the scented limes,
Where the breezes rise and fall,
In the burning heat of the noonday glare
There are sun-kissed hollyhocks, tall and fair,
That droop by the lichened wall.
And I court the shade of the garden glade,
While the rooks sail overhead ;
And the long-loved days come back again,
As I count the links in memory's chain
Of days that are past and dead.

The brook flows on by the king-cup beds,
Thro' the heart of the fern-clad gill ;
And the water drips from the rocky heights,
And the trout still leap in the summer nights,
As they dart past the water-mill.
What profit to pine for a rod and line
When my hand has lost its art ?
For the brook's but a link in memory's chain,
And the evening of life, with its storms and rain,
Is stealing across my heart.

The home of the wild hill-grouse is there,
On the moors of eternal blue ;
And I dream again of the August days,
When the tarns were hid with the steaming haze
And we shot the long day thro'.

The heather is brown on the sun-charred down,
And my gun has been locked away,
To add yet a link to memory's chain
Of the years that can never come back again,
To tell of a bygone day.

Beyond the brook and the far blue hills,
Is the sea, with its wondrous tale
Of the tide-lashed surf, and the mermaid's bed,
And the cry of the sea-mews overhead;
It was there that I loved to sail.
But the weather-scarred skiff lies under the cliff,
In a ruin of wreck and rust;
And it stands for a link in memory's chain,
For I never shall sail on the sea again,
And the timbers will turn to dust.

Behind the limes and the hollyhocks,
Half-hid, are the stable walls;
But it costs a pang when I look that way,
For it brings back many a vanished day,
When my hunters filled the stalls.
The swallows have flown, and the autumn winds moan;
The cruse and the pitcher are dry;
And twisted and torn are the links of the chain,
And the husk takes the place of the golden grain,
And the hunter creeps home to die.

There, in the vale of the western hills,
Are the homes of the flocks and herds;
And acres of beautiful sun-lit corn,
Where oft on a sweet September morn
Still brood the coveys of birds.
The toilers will reap, and the sickle will sweep,
And the stubbles will edge the lea,
Like vanishing links in memory's chain;
For long e'er the harvest is gold again,
The Reaper may come for me.

The sheep-bells echo across the vale,
By the church and the old yew-tree;
And every night, in a crimson wave,
The heaven-born sunset floods the grave
Where my best-loved waits for me.
But my heart is set, though my eyes are wet,
And I check the tears that fall:
One day I shall see my own again,
And the broken links in memory's chain
Will be mended once for all.

FRESH FIELDS AND PASTURES NEW FOR SPORTSMEN.

By 'TRIVIATOR.'



RIDICULOUS as it may seem to the Radical ear, men and women in Ireland, who can see a little beyond their noses, are beginning to find out that Mr. Arthur James Balfour has been the real benefactor to the Bogtrotters—and that without any *arrière pensée* of purchasing votes for his party or popularity for himself—by the girdle of Light Railways with which he brought the congested districts into touch with the more civilised and wealthy portions of the island, and opened them out not only to traders, but also to tourists and trippers, and above all to sportsmen, from all countries. Travelling is now made so easy that hundreds of anglers, who are familiar with the St. Lawrence and its tributaries, with British Columbia, Labrador, and Norway, knew absolutely nothing about the piscatorial potentialities of the kingdom of Kerry, which all the time was within a comparatively short distance of that 'Hub' of the civilised world, London, and has now been brought within twenty-two hours of easy travelling from that centre. But to 'the general,' or in other words to the public, the knowledge that there were lakes and rivers teeming with salmon and trout, and wild moors and marshes on which the sharp screech of the startled snipe was the common cry in winter and early spring, and that sporting privileges over these waters and wastes were easily acquired, was of very little avail unless it was accompanied by the sober certainty that comfortable accommodation could be obtained in these districts at a reasonable rate, and that the nomadic anglers or gunners would not be constantly exposed to the predatory instincts of rapacity on the part of the carmen who took them from their quarters to the shooting-grounds of the hotel to range over, or the boatmen who rowed them from one lacustrine reach to another. It will, I feel sure, be a gospel of glad tidings to many in populous city pent to learn that the almost inestimable advantages of good cooking, scrupulous cleanliness, and general comfort and *bien être*, have been secured for all adventurers who are willing to try their luck in Southern Kerry, and that

proximity to their fishing and shooting has also been combined with much beauty of scenery, in which softness is happily blended with more that is rugged, stern, and wild.

Horace has told us, in oft-quoted verse, that there lived many heroes before Agamemnon, but that their do ughty deeds did not help to illumine the blazon of human bravery and magnanimity, because the recorder had not yet been revealed or the historian discovered to lighten the darkness of the world. So, too, may it be said that these sporting resources had lain in the comparative shade, because there were only indifferent ways of reaching them, and very indifferent 'entertainment' for the traveller and sportsman when they had been reached.

Indeed, what we have said of Southern Kerry was true of much of Ireland half a dozen decades ago, ere railways and steamships had annulled the ban of insulation or isolation which their geographical situation had imposed upon the

'Penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos,'

and more especially those Westerly and South-Westerly Britons (or Celts, if the term be preferred), who seemed doomed to endemic obscurity and permanent poverty, though dowered by boon nature with a wealth of splendid scenery, diversified by wood, water, and mountain, all abounding in game, and with a fine climate and infinite strength of sanitation.

Mr. Balfour's Light Railways have brought these dark regions into the light of day and within the cordon of civilisation; the Southern Hotels Company have done the rest, in securing the best sporting and scenic sites for their new ventures, and by taking care that their creations should be up to date and full of all the comforts, and even small superfluities, which the average tourist and sportsman considers so necessary to his daily existence, more especially in the Long Vacation.

The wants of Ireland have, as we all know, been very numerous and very engrossing for a number of years; they have occupied the time and attention of Ministers and Parliaments, and even the genius of the great Gladstone failed to comprehend or satisfy half of them; but among all the wants of the past and present there was none more generally felt and acknowledged than *the want of good hotel accommodation to tempt travellers to come to a district and prolong their stay once they had mastered the initial difficulty.* There were comfortable coaching *caravanserais* throughout England all along the main

lines of travel, and perhaps some of the mediæval and aged contrast them favourably with the larger railway establishments of the present period, when the traveller is known by the number of his room, much like the prisoner at Pentonville, instead of being the object of the tender cares of barmaid, butler, and boots. The haunts of anglers in England are full of nice, small, riverside snuggeries, with gardens stocked with old-fashioned herbs and flowers, and sheets redolent of the lavender they produced; but similar snuggeries were for the most part non-existent in Ireland, and, though hospitality flourished at the Hall and Castle, the *modicum hospitium* was almost entirely wanting on the western side of the Channel, while dirt, decay, and disrepair, bad cooking, big bills, and the constant demand for *backschish*, were wont to repel rather than attract the casual traveller or tourist, whose head was full of taking his ease in his inn, and finding there, like Shenstone, his 'warmest welcome.'

The Right Hon. John Philpot Curran, who, as a member of a Bar proud of its distinctions and privileges, was bound to frequent the best hotels going on Circuit, has given it as his deliberate opinion that if the fleas of a certain hostelry had only been unanimous and co-operative, they could have forced him out of the four-poster he occupied, for they were as numerous and warlike as those to be found in the ordinary Spanish *Fonda*.

Sir Josiah Barrington tells us, in his amusing, quaint way, a tale of hotel life in a lonely part of the county of Wexford. A barrister on Circuit complained, on the morning of his first visit to the place, that he had found the sheets on his bed rather damp. 'Och, thin, faith, yer 'onner, that's quite impossible, for Counsellor O'Mulligan slept every night for the past fortnight in those blessed sheets!' was the reply of the Biddy of the breakfast-table; and those familiar with Thackeray's tour in Ireland, in the middle of the century, will recollect his strictures on the Shelbourne Hotel, in St. Stephen's Green, then one of the very best in Dublin, though never equal to what it is at present. It was at the Shelbourne Hotel that a lady from England was staying, a decade or two after Thackeray's era. She had a Dutch *vrouw's* love of soap and water, though, unlike the latter, she bestowed both on her person and not on her porcelain, and she worried the maids-in-waiting mightily by continually ringing for hot water. At last one of them, freer of

speech than the others, declared, 'Bedad, Miss, 'tis you must have the raal dirty skin, av it wants so much washing!'

Since then England and Ireland have both improved their hotel form beyond measure, and the daily tub is as much a matter of course as the morning meal; nor is 1s. 6d. charged for it, as in old times, when it was accounted a luxury—a charge, or rather an imposition, that so worried the soul of a gallant and well-known Guardsman, that on one occasion he upset his bath on the floor by way of teaching the hotel harpies to be more reasonable.

Since the middle of the century, or a little later, perhaps, good hotels have arisen in Irish towns, and in places much affected by the tourist wave or by shoals of sportsmen, and for several decades places like Killarney have had good hotels to offer to visitors; but the out-of-the-way places were very badly supplied with such accommodation, and hence Ireland fell out of the track of Long Vacation wanderers, and Scotland and Switzerland received their cash and custom, to their great enrichment and plenishing, and as a reward for the foresight and energy that had ministered so kindly to their wants and wishes.

In the beginning of May, the Highland Hotels Company of Ireland bid about a hundred and thirty representative men to a *déjeuner* at the new hotel they had opened at Bundoran, on the Bay of Donegal. The 160 miles between it and Dublin was run over at express rate, and similar speed was maintained on the return journey, so that the denizens of the Milesian Metropolis might boast that without any extra exertion they had crossed their entire island from sea to sea, played golf, or bathed in the wide waters of the Atlantic, and seen Lough Erne and Lough Melville, and the grouse mountains of Fermanagh, Donegal, and Sligo, within about fourteen hours! Since that day the Bundoran Hotel has been, I hear, quite full, though the drought has, of course, been most hostile to the angler.

It was on the 4th of June that Lord Houghton, accompanied by Colonel Dease (one of the pioneers in this scheme of opening out Ireland by means of easy railway rates, and reasonable and comfortable hotels), Colonel Jekyll, R.E., and Captain the Hon. G. Digby, R.N., and one or two more, set off from Dublin for Killarney to *sample* these new ventures. A couple of days was devoted to Killarney's lacustrine loveliness, and Lord Kenmare, the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, acted

as Lord Houghton's 'guide, philosopher, and friend' in this district, where he owns a great deal of the surrounding soil and one of the deer forests which slope down to the lakes, that are said to harbour *the heaviest stags in the kingdom, though not the best antlered*. The Southern Railway Hotel was the headquarters of the party, and everything passed off admirably, though there was a great influx of English, African, and American visitors. A few salmon were killed every week on the lakes, and some trout, but the sun was too gaudy for sport.

Lord Houghton passed on next to the new hotel at Carragh Lake. This is a Titanic tarn, overlooked by mountains that rise sheer from its shores, while salmon and white trout pass into its waters by a short or narrow gut from the sea. This hotel, like the others that constitute the trilateral, was a country house with its woods and shrubberies, and has only been enlarged, decorated, and extended. Waterville, reached after the Artillery Camp at Glenbeigh (where that good sportsman, Colonel Knox, R.H.A., who used to ride for the Duke of Connaught when he was quartered in Ireland, was in command of a troop of horse gunners) had been duly visited, by an uninteresting drive from Cahirciveen, was the next stage for repose and restauration. A lake of five miles in length by three in width, and not more than a mile from the bay at Ballinskillicks, is full of trout and salmon, as any traveller may ascertain for himself by a visit to Mr. Butler's weir, which dates from the days of King John. Some 400 salmon have been killed in it by anglers this season, though not many since the drought set in. There are other lakes embosomed in mountains a few miles to the eastward, and all are full of what it is the fashion to call 'sporting fish,' for pike, perch, trout, carp, roach, dace, and *hoc genus omne*, are unknown in these exclusive preserves. The hotel was originally the manor house on the Hartopp estate. The company have enlarged and modernised it, and Lord Houghton's party found it extremely comfortable. A long, tedious drive of some five hours along the coast-line, past Derrynane Abbey, the home of the great Liberator, Daniel O'Connell, as it is now of his grandson, and the village of Sneem, brings the traveller to Parknasilla, on the shore of Kenmare Bay. This house was, till its acquisition by the Hotel Company, the summer residence of the Bishop of Limerick. It stands in extensive and well-wooded grounds, that slope down to the sea, and as it is surrounded by a number of well-timbered

parks, the property of Colonel Hartley, Mr. Bland, Mr. Heard, and Mr. Warden, the effect of a cobalt sea, precipitous mountains, and wide woodlands, is very fine. The hotel was as comfortable as the others, the highest praise that could be given; and besides cock-shooting in winter, there is a great deal of good trout-fishing to be had near it. Opposite the house, and dotted about the bay, are wooded islets of great beauty, none more beautiful than Garinish, where Lord Dunraven has built himself a lovely lodge. Opposite, too, on the far shore, is Derreen, Lord Lansdowne's residence, where Froude, the historian, wrote annals and romances in his own transcendent style; but none of the neighbouring seats can compare with Dromore Castle, the residence of the Mahonny family.

Kenmare will be the outpost of the Hotel Company, for here the foundation has been laid of a very large hotel.

Lord Houghton and his party were all enchanted with what they saw in this lovely corner of Kerry, where, in a single day, you can come across seals, eagles, falcons, and red deer, and catch salmon galore. The mildness of the climate is attested by the fact that in many places the fuchsia makes a fence round field or cottage, while the bamboo flourishes, and the *Osmunda regalis* and London Pride are common weeds.

One of the phenomena in Southern Kerry that will probably strike the tourist, who has read up Thackeray's Sketches in Ireland and much of the literature of the century, is the absence of the Milesian mendicant, who formed such a characteristic feature in every popular gathering in the fifties and sixties. Where are the cripples who could sprint on occasion for a sixpence against the best of 'the boys?' the men with deformities carefully exaggerated, and 'set,' as it were, in a frame for the eye of compassion and pity? Where are the women who looked little more than huge bundles of malodorous rags, with children slung about them like the papooses of the Sioux, Pawnees, or Arapahoes? They have disappeared, or their occupation has become unremunerative, and they have taken to work, and may be found sitting, clothed and in their right minds, near cottages infinitely cleaner and sweeter than those of their forbears and predecessors in the art of taking toll of the unwary tourist and traveller.

Not that almsgiving has ceased to be a virtue in the national cult, or that almoners have failed to find worthy objects of their largesse and bounty. The poor we have always with us is still

unfortunately amply illustrated in beautiful Kerry, but poverty has lost much of its repulsive squalor, and the litany of the mendicants is no longer an ear-filling sound. Of course, wherever there are travellers by coach or car, there will always be good-natured, impulsive folk who chuck coppers about freely to boys and girls that cut capers, turn somersaults, or otherwise tickle their fancy ; but 'the Soggurth Aroon' does his best to discourage these offerings, and warns tourists against such lavish largesse. Even round Killarney, where the travelling tide is strongest, and Irish wit and readiness is in constant play to win some current coin from the cosmopolitan crowd, begging has been exchanged for barter, and, in point of fact, the visitor is not more molested than he might be at Niagara, or on a Sussex common occupied by a gipsy horde. The story goes that not long ago, at 'the Gap of Dunloe,' one of the last strongholds of aggressive beggary, a widow woman, with a tale of woe, fastened on a solitary tourist (perhaps a remanet of James, the novelist), and having failed to induce him to buy a cup made from the horn of a Kerry cow, or some such 'tuppenny-ha'penny' article, followed him for a mile or two, and at last almost insisted on being *paid* for having gone so far with him, asking him what the Devil he meant by occupying her time so long ! On this the victim to her assiduity read her a homily, and implored her not to speak of his Satanic Majesty, as he was dead and never mentioned now, concluding by offering her sixpence. She took the coin in her hand, looked the gent full in the face, and added, 'And the Divil's dead, is he ? Well, now, here's sixpence for ye, for ye know it's a custom in Kerry *when the father dies to make a collection for the family !*'

NO ROOM TO PASS.

By G. H. JALLAND.

I WAS sitting with a copy of the *Field* by a cosy fire one dreary afternoon in November, reading accounts of the clinking runs which seemed to be taking place all over the country, just at that time when the duties of my profession kept me chained in town, whilst my heart was in the pastures. But the 'quick things,' 'red-letter days,' &c.,

began to pall after I had waded through some five or six columns, for descriptions of runs, however well written, are apt to become monotonous reading unless one is familiar with the country over which they have taken place. I had almost fallen asleep over what must in reality have been a most exciting gallop, when I was suddenly awakened by the door of my room being violently opened, and the cheery voice of my friend Jack Nelson, who burst in upon me.

‘Hallo, Fred! Awfully glad to find you in! What do you think? I’ve found her!’ he exclaimed all in a breath, seizing my hand, and shaking it until a dislocation seemed quite probable. Accustomed as I was to Jack’s high spirits and erratic movements, this extraordinary statement of his was utterly inexplicable, and his sudden advent quite unexpected; for less than a week ago I had received a letter from him, giving accounts of the glorious sport he was enjoying in the V. W. H. country where he had taken a place for the season, and offering me a bed and a mount whenever I could spare the time to run down and see him. And here he was in town, brimming over with excitement, and evidently burning to confide some love-affair or other to me.

‘Well, I’m glad you’ve found her, old chap!’ I laughingly answered. ‘But before you tell me who she is, and what on earth this all means, do, for goodness’ sake, take off that hat and ulster, and have some tea or something.’

‘No, thanks! Can’t stop a minute! Just rushed in on my way from the station, to ask you to come and have some dinner with me to-night. Cab’s outside, got to see my tailor, and fly down to Tattersall’s!’ he said, and then, with a reproachful look, he went on. ‘But, look here, do you mean to say you don’t really know who I mean? Why, man, have you forgotten her so soon? Who do you suppose it could be but that divine apparition we met in Norway, you old ass? Surely even you must remember her! Well, bye-bye. Come to-night, and I’ll tell you all about it. Luckiest thing in the world. Don’t be late. The Grand, you know!’ and with this he gave my arm a final twist, and flew out of the room like a whirlwind.

‘Umph!’ I said to myself as I again sank into the depths of my comfortable chair. ‘Now, what on earth does all this mean? The beggar is evidently in love, and from what he said I suppose I ought to know the lady. “That divine apparition we met in Norway.” I certainly don’t remember anything of the sort.



"The next moment
there was a crash."

ALLARD



I do recollect the natives were uncompromisingly plain, and the tourists we met, a commonplace lot. 'Whoever does he mean?' Then suddenly it dawned on me. 'Why, of course it's that girl who came so nearly sending Jack and myself into another world. I remember he seemed rather smitten at the time. By Jove, we had a near shave—it makes my hair curl now to think of it!' No wonder it was all so clear in my mind, for it had only happened the preceding summer, and was about the narrowest escape that has ever happened to me. We, that is Jack and myself, were driving together in one of those queer little Norwegian carts (*stolkjerres*), and some distance behind us came another laden down with our baggage and fishing-gear, for we were bound to a river we had leased for the season. It was an unfrequented country road over which we were travelling, and one of the vilest imaginable, for it twisted, and turned, and zigzagged about in a most exasperating manner, and we were bumped and jolted in the springless cart until it was a mercy our joints held together. I remembered we had reached a portion of the track where it ascended far above the fjord, corkscrewing its way up the side of the cliff. We were crawling slowly along, the wiry little beast in the shafts tugging and scrambling up the stony road. One minute we were skirting the very edge of a frightful precipice, and the next plunging into the forest of dwarf pines which clothed the mountain-side. We had reached what appeared to be almost the last turn in the tiresome hill, and had pulled up to let our pony catch his wind on a narrow platform, which appeared to have been blasted out of the side of the cliff; the rocks above hung right over the track, and below us there was a sheer drop of several hundred feet into the fjord, a few conical stones set up on end forming a sort of guard on the verge of the precipice. I remember we were discussing the probable result of a collision at this corner, when suddenly we heard the rattle of an approaching vehicle. 'By Jove, here's something coming! They simply can't pass here!' exclaimed Jack. I had hold of the reins, and in a moment got the pony going, hoping to clear the corner so that the on-coming driver might be able to see us in time to avoid a collision. But no sooner had we got round the turn, than another as bad, if not worse, was before us. I lashed the pony cruelly to make this second bend in time, but he could get up no speed on the steep incline, and the approaching wheels sounded right on to us. I am not quite clear as to what then happened, but I remember

the sudden appearance of a carriage, driven at a smart trot, swung round the corner, not twelve yards from our pony's nose, 'Jump out!' one of us shouted, and we sprang from our seat, and went sprawling over each other in the road; the next moment there was a crash, and we saw our wretched pony driven by the force of the collision right across the track. It looked as though nothing could help him going over, but luckily one of those upright stones wedged between the shafts and just prevented the catastrophe. Had we remained in the cart nothing could have saved us, as one of the wheels was spinning in mid-air over the terrible drop, and we must have accompanied our luncheon-basket, which went whizzing into the depths below. Our aggressor had been even more fortunate, for though the pony had been thrown down and the carriage upset, it had fallen away from the edge, and was never in any danger of going over. As we were scrambling to our feet we heard an unmistakably English voice cry 'Help!' from beneath the overturned carriage. The tone and a glimpse of a white skirt were sufficient to tell us a lady was in distress, and we promptly rushed to the rescue.

'If you'll unfasten the apron, I think I can get out,' continued the voice, and a pair of eyes looked up at us with no more fear in them than if the possessor had been asking us to pass the salt at a dinner-table. We soon freed her from the apron, and taking hold of her arms, drew her out from her uncomfortable position. Yes, there could be no mistake about her being an exceptionally pretty girl, but the cool manner in which she regarded the whole business struck me more than anything. 'Thank you so much!' she exclaimed as we set her on her feet. 'What a lucky thing none of us went over! Hurt?—oh, no, thanks, not in the least! Am afraid it was all my fault. I heard you shouting, but I simply couldn't pull up in time; that pony has a cast-iron mouth. Hope neither of the poor little fellows are damaged;' and she proceeded to feel the ponies' legs, and examine the few slight grazes which had resulted from the collision. Both were contentedly grazing, though one was attached to a conveyance turned on its side, and the other to a cart hanging half over a precipice. We then started to get the traps on to their wheels and look for breakages, but fortunately we found nothing had smashed, and in less than ten minutes after the accident both were ready and waiting for their respective loads. As we helped the young lady to her seat, I

ventured to suggest that it was hardly advisable to trot down these dangerous hills.

'Oh, I think it's simply splendid. Besides, one never meets anything.' Then seeing my amused look she corrected herself. 'Oh, well, it's very seldom, and usually there's plenty of room to pass. Thank you both so much. Good afternoon.' And with a flick of the whip she set her pony going. We couldn't take off our hats because they were already lying in the road, so we bowed low, and then I caught Jack's eye, and we both burst into a loud laugh, which must have been heard by the receding girl, who turned and waved her whip as she shot round the next corner.

'By Jove, what an angel!' exclaimed Jack.

'Yes, a destroying one! Came precious nearly making angels of us!' I replied.

'But what pluck!'

'Ignorance!'

'Why, man, it was all the pony's fault!'

'No business to trot down a hill like this!' and we came precious nearly quarrelling on the spot, but a laugh just saved it, and we mounted our cart and continued our journey. For some days afterwards Jack was always recurring to the subject, wondering who the girl was, where she lived, and so on. But he did not find me a very sympathetic listener, and by-and-by he ceased to talk about her. But I know for a fact he made several excursions to villages in the neighbourhood, I presume in search of the young lady; but as I heard nothing further, I expect he was never able to find her. So this was his *inamorata*. However, I thought to myself, I shall be certain to have enough of this to-night. Sure enough I had. He talked of nothing else the whole evening. It seemed the previous day he had met her in the hunting-field. Found a mutual acquaintance, and got formally introduced. Name, Miss Powers; other name, Nelly. Presented to papa. Parent's gratitude for assistance formerly rendered to his daughter. Invitation to dine. Looks ripping in a habit, and divine in evening dress. Brilliant horsewoman. Only just come to the Vale, and means to hunt six days a week. Have just run up to town to get a couple more gees and some extra togs, mustn't miss a single day with her, and so on, until I was simply bored to death, and got away as early as I could with the fraudulent excuse of having work to finish that night.

Having a few days to spare at Christmas, I thought I would

run down and have a hunt with my friend ; so I wrote informing him of my intention. By the next post came a letter saying how delighted he was, but mentioning nothing about his attachment ; so by this I concluded he had cooled off. Imagine my surprise when, on arrival, I found my erstwhile lively chum reduced to a most despondent condition by the unrequited state of his affections. The same night he confided in me that he had come to the conclusion his chance was hopeless, and like the boy he was, assured me he could never care for anybody else, and his future existence was a dreary blank. No, he had not actually been rejected. Never dared to ask her, saw it would be not the slightest use. She was very kind and nice, let him ride with her, ate his hunting chocolate, singled him out as her pilot when she condescended to avail herself of such aid, and never snubbed him. But when he grew sentimental she always turned the conversation to horses, or hounds, or something else ; and the more he saw of her the more he felt it was utterly impossible that he could ever get her to care for him. I tried to cheer the poor chap, but lover-like he refused to be comforted, and after a thoroughly wearisome evening I retired to bed with the more cheerful prospect of a day's hunting before me on the morrow. I was also to renew my acquaintance with the young lady who was playing such havoc with my friend's heart, for he said, as I bid him good-night, 'You'll see her to-morrow, old chap. She's sure to be out ; never misses a single day. Nor more do I,' he added, in a very melancholy tone, as though hunting was the most wearisome of duties, and one which had to be performed.

By half-past ten next morning we were on our way to the meet, a famous fixture, which lay about five miles from my friend's place. We arrived to find a big crowd assembled, and poor Jack soon discerned his adored one, and led me to pay my respects. She was chatting with some men when we rode up, but directly she caught sight of Jack she turned her horse in his direction, and gave him such a smile of welcome, that, if I am any judge of the sex, augured well for his ultimate success, in spite of his lugubrious assertions. She did not recollect my face until Jack introduced us, when she at once remembered me, and held out her hand, saying, with a charming display of her lovely teeth, 'Oh, I *am* glad to meet you again ! Do you know, I never half thanked you for what you did for me in Norway. Mr. Nelson and I have often laughed and talked about it. And, do you know, he has almost persuaded me that it was not my fault

at all. He says if you had given me a little more room I could have passed easily. Now do please tell me honestly was there room?’

Poor Jack looked so shamefaced that I hadn't the heart to let the poor beggar down as he deserved, so I said something about having forgotten the width of the road, and as hounds just then moved off, I was relieved from further embarrassing questions. There was no doubt she looked awfully neat in a habit, and the way she handled her fidgety thoroughbred at once showed her proficiency in the saddle. As we jogged along I was made acquainted with her father, a typical English country gentleman. He promptly got on to the subject of our Norwegian adventure, and was profuse in his thanks for the share I had taken in assisting his daughter, and nothing would do but that Jack and I should drive over to his place and dine that very night. By this time we had reached the first draw, a small wood of about three or four acres. ‘Come along down here,’ said my new acquaintance, and, calling to Jack and his daughter who were just in front, opened a gate and turned into a field which lay alongside the spinney.

‘There's a fox for a thousand!’ he exclaimed, pulling up, as a single long-drawn note of a questing hound broke the silence of the wood. ‘Yoi, push him up!’ cheered the huntsman. Another hound acknowledged its conviction, another, and another, until there was a crash of music that reverberated through the trees, and made my heart go thumping against my ribs like a sledge-hammer. ‘Sh-h-h! There he goes!’ whispered Miss Powers, pointing with her whip to where we saw the red rascal sneaking along the woodland fence, now showing himself for a moment and then slipping back under cover. When the end of the wood was reached he made a bold dash for the open, and whisked his white-tagged brush as much as to say, ‘Catch me if you can.’ Having given him sufficient law, we sent up a chorus of view-halloas that startled every pheasant, and brought half the field thundering in our direction. The next moment we saw hounds scramble out of the covert and race away on the line. So, catching hold of our horses, we dashed off in pursuit. Away we went over a lovely country. We had got an excellent start, and the style in which my mount negotiated the first half-dozen fences assured me I was on a good one.

What a glorious sensation it is to feel the rush of the wind, and the sweep of a good horse's strides, after one has been

cooped up in town for several months together, with nothing more exciting than an occasional canter in the Row to break the monotony. Hounds slipped on at a tremendous pace, and we had no little difficulty in keeping near them, as the grass rode a trifle heavy, and several fences required creeping. I remember a man in a bowler and a check coat was leading, and the way he drove his horse at the thick bullfinches and charged the stiff timber, showed how anxious he was to maintain his position. Jack was riding a little to his left, with Miss Powers in close attendance; her father and myself came next. In this order we covered several miles. Once it looked as if there must have been a check, as hounds in their eagerness over-ran the scent where the fox had popped through a gap; but they quickly discovered their error, and swinging smartly round took up the line and sped along once more. At another point I came precious nearly losing my place, as my gamey mount over-jumped himself at some water, and it was just touch and go whether we went over, but a quick scramble on his part, and utter inaction on mine, saved us. Miss Powers was going splendidly, and though it occurred to me that if I had had the honour of being her pilot, I should have asked her for a little more law at the fences, yet I dare say Jack was only too happy and proud in his position to think about being jumped on. Soon there loomed right across our line the shape of a high railway embankment, but I trusted ere it was reached the hounds would turn either to the right or left, as I knew from experience that railroads are nasty things, even without embankments, to cross. The fences are usually big and awkward, and the signal wires are just the right height to turn a horse over. However, my wish was not fulfilled, as the pack kept straight on, and we saw them sweep up the steep incline and disappear over the other side. The man in the bowler was close up, and without hesitation sent his horse at the boundary fence, a biggish double of hedge and timber, which he got over safely, and went clattering and scrambling up the stony slope. I next saw Jack turn quickly in his saddle and shout to Miss Powers, 'You musn't come! Go round by the hill!' pointing with his whip in the direction, where, about a quarter of a mile down the line, there was the opening of a tunnel where the railroad entered from the hill-side on to the embankment. Mr. Powers also shouted, 'Stop, Nelly, stop!' and greatly to my surprise I saw the girl commence to rein in, but the next second I had shot past her, was over the fence, and with all my

weight thrown forwards on to my horse's neck, began struggling up the bank close behind Jack. By Jove, it was a frightful place, more like the side of a house than anything I can think of. The least touch on the curb would have been sufficient to pull a horse over backwards, and the foothold, being principally loose gravel, was terribly insecure. A bad-enough place for a man, but a thousand times worse for a woman handicapped with a side-saddle, and as my horse slipped and struggled up the steep side I was thankful that Miss Powers had not attempted it. I reached the top almost simultaneously with Jack, and when we had tripped and blundered our way over the wires, and in and out across the hollowed permanent way, we saw the man in the bowler had dismounted and was coaxing his horse down the incline on the other side. It had been risky enough climbing up, but the getting down looked many times worse. It would have been sheer madness to have attempted it in the saddle, and with one accord we promptly followed the example of our leader, and jumping off our horses proceeded to lead them down. The descent proved by no means easy or pleasant even then, for it was impossible to get a secure foothold, and the danger of one's horse rolling over its leader was imminent. However, we reached the bottom in safety, and were just preparing to remount and pop over the fence, which just there happened to be an easy standing jump with a bit of a drop, when we heard the distant roar of an approaching train, and the next second, whilst Jack was saying, 'That's a close shave, old chap,' we saw the engine shoot from the mouth of the tunnel. We were in the act of squaring our horses at the fence, when a clattering on the rails close above made us look up, and to our horror we saw Miss Powers on the track, trying to force her horse down the embankment. But the brute stood with outstretched neck and firmly planted feet, obstinately refusing to face the place. The girl did not seem to realise in any way the frightful danger of the descent, as she double-thonged her horse in order to force him down; nor could she have been aware of the rapidly approaching train, for I remember she gave us a saucy smile when we looked up, as much as to say, 'You see I've followed you, after all.' The situation was terrible to the last degree, and to the end of my days I shall never forget the horror of it. The engine, panting and rushing on, devoured the distance as though eager to claim its prey. The merry girl sat smiling in her saddle, urging her obstinate horse to no effect. 'Jump off!

the train !' shouted Jack, who was the first to find his voice. Then for the first time hearing the noise, she turned her head and discovered her terrible position ; in a moment she became completely paralysed, her whip and reins fell from her hands, and she sat gazing at her rapidly approaching destroyer with horror-stricken eyes and powerless limbs. It seemed nothing could save her, and fascinated, I sat transfixed with terror of it. Suddenly I became aware that Jack was dashing up the embankment with gigantic strides and superhuman efforts, but it looked a hopeless race between life and death. He could never reach her in time. I had half turned my head to avoid the awful end, when the girl was torn from her saddle, and the same instant it seemed, the engine struck the wretched horse and hurled him crashing down the slope. With a roar of thunder the train had passed. What with the plunging of my startled horse and the smoke, it was some seconds before I could see the result of the heroic attempt. Then as the smoke began to clear I saw something by the side of the line, and for the moment I thought they had both been killed. I sprang from my horse to do what I could, when to my infinite relief I could see Jack was all right, and what was more, he held the poor girl in his arms. 'Thank God for this!' I exclaimed, and continuing my ascent, reached the side of my friend. The terror of the moment had so altered the poor fellow's face that I hardly recognised him. He was bending over the girl and moaning, 'She's dead! She's dead!' and indeed to all appearance she looked so; her colour was ghastly white, and she lay all limp and senseless in the strong clasp. 'Perhaps she has only fainted,' I suggested. 'No, the train was on us. I saw it—I saw it. She's dead!' answered poor Jack in a choking voice. But as I could see nothing to suggest that she had been struck by the engine, I took hold of her wrist and felt for her pulse. For a moment I was uncertain, and then to my joy I felt the steady throb. She lived! Jack had been in time! When I had convinced the poor fellow of this, his relief was a delight to witness. Then with careful arms we carried the unconscious girl to the foot of the embankment, and having brought my flask from my saddle, I forced some spirit between her teeth, and was promptly rewarded by the return of colour to the white face. 'She's coming round capitally, old man. She'll be all right in a minute. I'll just go and see if anything can be done for that horse,' I said, and turned to the poor brute, who lay



And the same instant it seemed,
The engine struck the wretched horse



struggling in the hedge, where the engine had flung him. As I drew near, his efforts grew weaker, and even as I reached him he gave a final plunge and lay dead. It was a merciful release, for he was terribly smashed up, poor beast. Eugh! it was a sickening sight. I quickly left, and went back to my heroic friend, who was still bending low over his interesting burden. But, though I made as much noise as I could amongst the gravel, I could not help overhearing some conversation in which the words Jack and Nelly both occurred. 'Now that's all right,' I said to myself.

By this time Miss Powers had quite recovered, for a rosy blush spread over her face as I came up, and she said with a smile, but in a rather weak voice, 'Even Mr. Nelson will admit there was no room to pass up there. Won't you, Jack?'

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



'UR POINT TO POINT,' after Finch Mason, illustrates amateur steeplechasing in the humorous and up-to-date style peculiar to this artist, and forms a pendant quartette to his set of 'Billiard Stakes,' recently noticed.

The first plate shows '*The Outraged Starter*,' who impatiently exclaims to his field, who do not appear to be at all anxious to get into line, '*Come, gentlemen, come! you're more than half an hour behind time!*'

'*And pray what business has Lady Violet with them?*'—'Well, she SAID her horse bolted with her,' explains why (in plate two) a lady is seen negotiating a wattle fence and 'going strong' amongst the competitors.

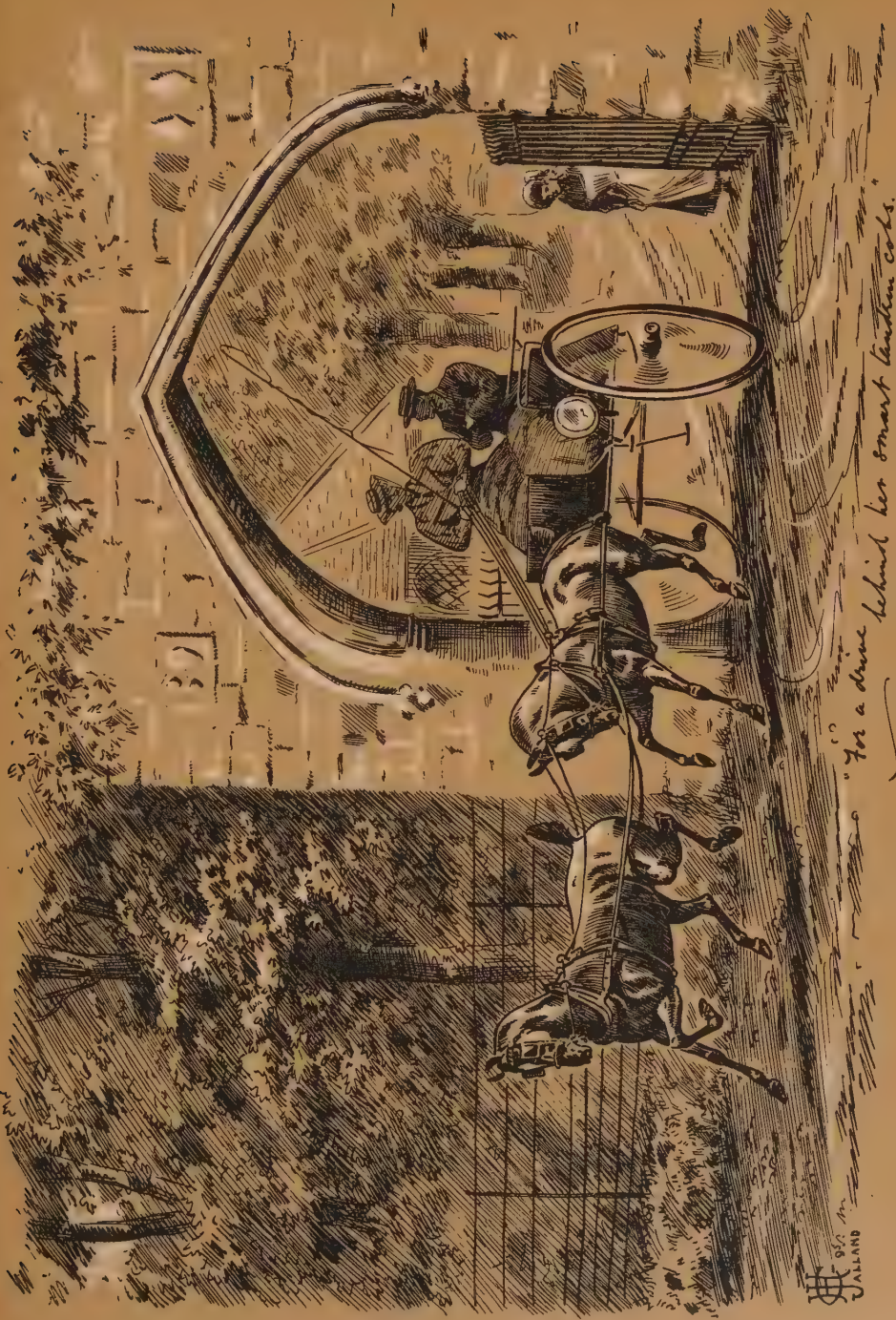
In plate three is seen a sportsman toiling with difficulty on foot through a piece of heavy plough in the hope of, some time or other, overtaking his horse; the facetious title of this is, '*Why little Timmins walks in!*'

'*The Winning Field*' is the fourth of the series, and exhibits a scene of frantic endeavour combined with much physical distress. '*Go along, George—the Grey's beat!*' is presumably the encouraging exclamation of an excited and doubtless interested onlooker.

There is every probability that this merry little series will find favour with sportsmen generally.

Messrs. Longmans have just issued the third volume of 'The Fur and Feather Series,' which treats of the *Pheasant*, and this will be found to be as interesting as the two devoted to the consideration of the *Partridge* and the *Grouse*, which have already preceded it. The pages descriptive of the natural history of the pheasant are again from the able pen of the Rev. H. A. Macpherson; and again does A. J. Stuart-Wortley descant eloquently and learnedly on the art of shooting the most gorgeous of game-birds; whilst the cookery department is entrusted to Alexander Innes Shand; and, as in the previous volumes, Alfred E. T. Watson is the editor. The illustrations, by A. Thorburn, are tastily executed.

An excellent number is the first one of the *Badminton Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, edited by A. E. T. Watson, and published by Longmans. Besides the crisply written notes by 'Rapier' (who for many years pleased and interested a multitude of readers of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*), there are ten papers dealing with Shooting, Racing, Fishing, Golfing, Cricketing, &c., by experts of the respective sports, headed by the Marquis of Granby, M.P., who discourses pleasantly in his paper, 'A North Derbyshire Moor.' The illustrations are copious and good.




"for a drive behind her smart tandem coats."

J. H. J. 1880
J. H. J.

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

TRIAL BY TANDEM.

By G. H. JALLAND.

N heiress, and an uncommonly pretty one to boot, is certain to attract followers wherever she may be located ; but in a slow country place like Parlingham, where a pretty girl is a rarity, a wealthy one almost unheard of, and the peculiarity of the district consists of its numerous impecunious young men, then you may imagine how it came to pass, when Miss Nelly Van Houten took up her residence at the Park, the ardent and interested youth of the country side commenced to curl their moustachios and to pay frequent—and to their exchequers disastrous—visits to tailors and hosiers. Mr. Cutter, who owns *the* sartorial establishment in the neighbouring cathedral town of Chimechester, said he never recollected such a sudden and, to him, inexplicable revival of trade.

The lady who caused all this flutter was an orphan and an only child. She hailed from over the water, *i.e.*, the land of pork and millionaires ; but, in reality, she was more English than American, as she had been educated here, during which period of her existence her parents had both simultaneously chosen to vacate this mortal sphere. On their decease the heroine of this story paid a visit to her native land to arrange her affairs, for she took after her papa in that she was both practical and business-like, afterwards returning to these shores, where she hired a lady of title, whom fortune had treated but shabbily, as her *chaperone*, was presented at Court, and became the rage and catch of the season. However, she declined to be caught, and, tiring of the racket and bustle of a

fashionable life, cut the whole thing when the season drew to a close, and, having a fondness for English country life, purchased Parlingham Park, the late country seat of Lord Fervars, who for his health and his creditors' sake, had betaken himself to foreign lands.

So this is how Miss Van Houten came to live at Parlingham, but what made her select and thus favour our somewhat slow and uninteresting country is a mystery.

Behold the lady, then, and her *chaperone*, the Hon. Mrs. Fillingham, a widow of imposing presence and highly aristocratic appearance, installed at the Park, and imagine for yourself how the exclusive county families one and all vied with each other as to which should be the first to welcome and entertain their new and interesting neighbour, and how the aforesaid impecunious young men each pictured to himself a life of married bliss in peace and plenty at Parlingham Park, and forthwith girded himself for the fray, at his tailor's expense, determined on the subjugation of the fair American.

In addition to the charms of wealth and beauty, Miss Van Houten possessed another attraction, which, to a sporting district like Parlingham, was sufficient by itself to lure victims into her toils, for she was a thorough sportswoman, had one of the most perfect seats on a horse imaginable, could handle a tandem a trifle better than most, and, moreover, she signified her intention of continuing poor Lord Fervars' princely subscription to the Ranem Hounds, and of hunting at least four days a week. So the country side, particularly the unmarried male portion thereof, simply went off their heads about her, and you heard nothing but her praises wherever you went. She was *fêted* and entertained on every possible occasion ; no function of any sort, be it tennis or tea-fight, garden-party or reception, horse-show or flower exhibition, thought itself complete without the gracious presence of the charming stranger, and, what's more, it was usually thus favoured, for she was affability itself, expressed herself delighted with everything and everybody, and her determination of settling down to the end of her days amongst such charming neighbours and congenial surroundings.

It was at Lady Pacton's garden-party that the Hon. Reggie Rackem made his first impression on Miss Van Houten. A number of the guests were looking over Lord Pacton's broodmares and foals, and were screaming with high-bred merriment at the antics of the youngsters, who, appearing to be conscious

of the amusement they were exciting, held impromptu races, kicking matches, and biting contests. Suddenly, when the fun was at its highest, two foals, a bay and a chestnut, who were enjoying a go-as-you-please biting and rearing match, approached too near the edge of the sunk fence, and in a moment the chestnut, who was backing away from its opponent, had fallen into the hollow, and lay struggling and kicking, with its near-side fore and hind legs fast in the iron railings. All was then changed to consternation and alarm. Lord Pacton, who had just been dilating on the chestnut's pedigree, and extolling its particularly fine make and shape, was now prancing up and down the edge of the sunk fence and bellowing for Johnson, the stud-groom. Some of the ladies screamed (they seemed to imagine it would help), whilst others implored the men present to go down and release the sufferer, but, I am ashamed to write it, not one of them stirred; they were full of theories and directions as to what ought to be done, and had no objection to joining their host in his cries for Johnson, but, no thank you, they were not going to risk their smart clothes or their precious limbs in a struggle with the terrified foal.

Hearing the hubbub, other guests came hurrying up from the pleasure-grounds, amongst them being the Hon. Reggie. No sooner had he arrived on the scene than he sprang down the bank, and, in less time than it takes to write these words, he had collared the foal and, by a dexterous twist and a powerful lift, had freed it from the fence, and it went bounding up the bank, with a shrill neigh of alarm, towards where its anxious mother was standing. Of course the rescuer was the hero of the hour; everybody praised and thanked him for his timely and prompt performance. Miss Van Houten, as usual the centre of a group of men, was heard to observe, in an audible *sotto voce*, to a lady who was standing beside her, 'Now that's what I should call a man!' and, before the afternoon drew to a close, it was evident to the observer—and there were several amongst the interested young men present—that the lady had been more than momentarily impressed by the Hon. Reggie. Hitherto he had only been treated to his ordinary share of the sweet smiles and bewitching glances which she dispensed right and left amongst her admirers, but it was noticed, after the foal incident, the smiles were directed unfairly often in the direction of the favoured one, and it was only from the dishes of cakes and baskets of fruit he offered that she deigned to help

herself. Then, as the guests were departing, the couple were observed issuing from the range of conservatories, where it is only reasonable to suppose, judging from the interval which had elapsed since their disappearance, that they must have enjoyed a *tête-à-tête* of at least half an hour's duration. This was the commencement.

A few days later it became known that the Hon. Reggie was superintending the laying-out of a golf-course in Parlingham Park, and, when this was completed, hardly a day passed but he was there, instructing the fascinating novice in the mysteries of the engrossing game. Soon people came to the very natural conclusion that he was to be the lucky man. His mother, Lady Rackem, only slightly demurred when congratulated on her son's prospects. The various other aspirants retired from the field, plunged in the deepest despair, for the thing was looked upon as good as settled, when it came to pass that the Hon. Reggie was possessed with a sudden and fervent desire to join his brother, who owned a cattle-ranch out West, and, with hardly an adieu to his friends and neighbours, he fled from Parlingham, and was on his way across the water.

The news fell like a thunderbolt on the community. What could have happened? Nobody could surmise. The couple volunteered no information, and, of course, nobody liked to question Miss Van Houten. Old Mrs. Bawdry tried to work the pump on one occasion, but she got such a snub for her pains that nobody else ventured. So the affair remained a mystery. The only particular of any importance bearing on the subject was brought forward by the Misses Hampton, two old maids, whose residence lay almost opposite the Park gates, and who were usually better informed than most people concerning the latest tittle-tattle in general, and the 'goings on' at the Park in particular. These ladies were the very last to have seen Miss Van Houten and her admirer in each other's company. It seems that, after a morning together on the links, they had gone to the Hall for lunch, and in the afternoon, about three o'clock, they were seen to start for a tandem drive behind Miss Van Houten's smart cobs. The lady was further observed to re-enter the Park with her team about six in the evening, the Hon. Reggie being absent from his seat beside her. This occurred on the Tuesday, and on the following Thursday he left for Montana. Rejected, of course, but why, after things had been going on so swimmingly? Gossip was, however, soon

turned into a fresh channel. The hunting season had commenced, and Miss Van Houten quickly selected another willing slave in the person of a certain Captain Point, who rented a hunting-box in the neighbourhood, and who proved himself to be about the hardest man to hounds in the Ranem Hunt. Him she chose as her pilot. He was the fortunate man whose sandwiches she condescended to nibble, and who was permitted the felicity of jogging home by her side on almost every occasion when returning from hunting. When not with hounds, the pair spent their days on the links, and at every dance or dinner-party Captain Point simply monopolised the fair American.

Matters went on like this till nearly Christmas, when the attachment ended as abruptly as in the case of poor Reggie. Curiously enough, too, a drive behind the tandem cobs was the prelude, or, at least, so the Misses Hampton declared. But, unlike his predecessor, Captain Point did not flee the country; however, it was evident to anybody that it was all over between him and Miss Van Houten. They merely acknowledged each other's presence when they happened to meet by the covert-side or at the houses of mutual friends, and it was further observed that if he could avoid meeting his late innamorata, he was quick to seize the opportunity.

Hardly a month had elapsed before it began to be noticed that the position lately occupied by the now discomfited Captain was in full possession of a younger and penniless son of Lord Fitzmoon. This young gentleman had had the good luck to be present on the occasion when Miss Van Houten got fast beneath her horse at the bottom of a deep ditch; at considerable personal risk he had effected the lady's rescue, and from that day forth the pair were almost inseparable. The betting was ten to one he would land the prize. He appeared to be winning hands down, when one eventful day he was taken for a tandem drive. There can be no doubt about it in this instance, for not only were the Misses Hampton to the fore as usual with their evidence, but our local sawbones, Jimmy Jessop, who was set fast with a bad case at the White Farm, which lies just on the outskirts of Marden Moor, declared he saw the pair drive past about three o'clock in the afternoon, and in less than an hour he heard the rattle of wheels and saw the tandem returning, the cobs all in a lather, and the seat beside the driver being empty.

In the hunting field on the following day, the lady and her late constant companion appeared to be barely on bowing terms.

Then it was Bob Haddingham's turn, after him came the Hon. Archie Brenting, and, in the course of time, Lord Singlet. Each had an innings of several months, and each in his turn seemed to succumb after the inevitable tandem drive. It was observed that all appeared to have been chosen after giving evidence of manly pluck. Bob's turn came after he had won the Hunt Cup. The Hon. Tommy's after the fire at the Manse, where, through his exertions, the servants sleeping in the attics had been rescued. Lord Singlet seemed to have been selected because of his late successful raid on the big game of South Africa. The profound secrecy of it all was one of the oddest things connected with it. Not one of the various victims was ever known to divulge a single particle of his experiences. Parlingham was in a fog, and the female section began to look with very suspicious eyes on the proceedings of the lady of the Park. After her numerous affairs, nobody could doubt her being an outrageous flirt; but, in spite of this, there was not in the district a solitary man, as yet untried, who would not gladly have had a go for the gloves, *i.e.*, if the lady had but beckoned him with even an eyelash.

After Lord Singlet's unsuccessful onslaught, and his subsequent return to the lions and elephants, there was a lull of several months in Miss Van Houten's love affairs. She seemed to have tired of conquest, or come to the end of local aspirants deemed worthy of her steel. It was at this time the papers were glowing with the doughty deeds performed by a small force engaged in a punitive expedition against a savage tribe in Central Africa. My cousin and particular chum, Fred Hain, a lieutenant, had been specially mentioned in the latest dispatches as being worthy of the highest honour to which a soldier can attain, for having, on two separate occasions, at frightful risk, rescued wounded comrades from under the very muzzles of the enemy's rifles. Dear old Fred, I felt tremendously proud of my friend. The very same day the accounts appeared in the papers, I happened to be dining at a neighbour's house where Miss Van Houten was also present. It fell to my lot to take that lady down, and almost the first words she addressed to me, after placing her hand on my arm, were concerning the latest news of the expedition.

'What a splendid fellow that Lieutenant Hain is!' she exclaimed. 'No honour is too high to be conferred on a man like that!'

Of course, I cordially agreed with her, and mentioned casually the man was a relation of mine and a great friend.

‘Oh, how charming!’ she cried. ‘Do please tell me all about him. What is he like? How tall is he? Is he dark or fair?’

She rattled on question after question all through dinner, until it was with no little difficulty that I managed to satisfy the lady’s curiosity and my own hunger at one and the same time. Then afterwards, in the drawing-room, I was made to relate many a tale of old Fred’s boyish days, until, proud as I was of my chum, had I not been a confirmed and determined bachelor, I should really have begun to be quite jealous of the beggar, for Miss Van Houten’s eyes were something to conjure with, and her expression, when deeply interested, was simply divine.

But there, I must keep myself and my feelings out of the story, for really they have nothing whatever to do with it. Time went on, and it soon became a regular thing whenever I met the young lady, which was of frequent occurrence, that I should be questioned and cross-questioned about my friend. She made me show her his photograph, and she took such a violent fancy to a parrot he had brought home for me some years before, that I could do nothing less than send the screaming wretch over to the Park. As there seemed no possible danger of my friend falling into the lady’s net, old Fred being the very last man you could imagine going in for that sort of thing, the affair afforded me no little amusement. Miss Van Houten was a most charming companion, and I derived considerable pleasure from her society. In the face of all this, I was not the least surprised when it came to my ears it was being whispered abroad that I was the latest victim; but, alas, no such luck, the gossips little knew the secondary nature of my fiddle, or the quality of the tune I was playing on it. True, she gave me far more than my share of her sweet smiles and delightful confidences. I was singled out as her special companion on the links, and on several occasions I received charming little notes asking me to perform different small offices for her, or sometimes desiring me to accompany her in her daily rides. But as to love-making, there was positively nothing approaching it; as I said before, I am a confirmed bachelor.

It must be here mentioned I wrote to Fred congratulating him on his success amongst the niggers, and I mentioned how a certain new neighbour of mine, a great heiress and a lovely girl, was taking a deep interest in his exploits. I told him to be

sure and look me up on his return, and make the acquaintance of the lady in question. Six months later (he was always a wretched correspondent) I had a letter from him saying his regiment was starting for home in a week's time, and that he fully intended to come and see me after first (as he was in duty bound) having paid a visit to his ancestral halls. There was a postscript which you may imagine I did not communicate to Miss Van Houten, though she succeeded in worming the rest of the contents of the letter out of me in no time. It ran thus : 'For goodness' sake don't bother me with females when I come to see you. Remember, I'm no ladies' man.' The next communication I received from him was a telegram very characteristic of my impetuous friend : 'Arrive Chimechester 7.30 to-night, Fred.' With his customary thoughtlessness he despatched the wire so late, that it only just gave me time to get the cart round and race to the station before the train was in. When I rushed on to the platform, you may imagine my surprise to find Mr. Fred busily engaged in handing a lady from a carriage, and my utter astonishment to discover the lady to be none other than Miss Van Houten. Hallo, I thought, here's a nice commencement. After I had shaken hands with them both, and expressed my delight at seeing my chum back safe and sound, Miss Van Houten laughingly exclaimed :

'You see, after all, I have been the first to welcome your friend. I recognised him the moment he stepped into the carriage at Euston—just been up for a day's shopping, you know—and being an American, and therefore privileged, I lost no time in introducing myself as a great friend and near neighbour of yours. And very glad I am that I did so, for Mr. Hain has entertained me most delightfully with his charming stories, and made me exceedingly grateful to him for turning the usually tiresome journey into such a pleasant one. Well, goodbye, hope I shall see you both up at the links to-morrow.'

We all shook hands, and she was conducted out of the station by her parcel-laden footman to the smart brougham which stood in waiting.

I had many things to talk over with Fred during our drive to Parlingham, but he persisted in harping on nothing else but his late journey from town. He told me how, at first, he thought the lady most forward and unladylike, how he soon discovered she was nothing of the sort, next she struck him as being most entertaining and interesting, soon as altogether

charming, afterwards as the most delightfully natural and lovely girl he had ever met, finally he declared, had he been a marrying man, she was just the sort of girl he would fall in love with. Poor old Fred, I saw at once how it was with him, he had succumbed without a struggle before the very first onslaught of those bewitching eyes, and was already fast in the syren's toils. That same night, after dinner, I thought it my duty to at once take the bull by the horns and let him hear a full account of the lady's numerous affairs, trusting that he might have the sense to take warning by their fate, and be advised in time. At first he declined to hear anything about the business at all.

'My dear fellow!' he exclaimed, 'I'm not in love with the girl, nor in the least likely to be. Then why tell me all this rigmarole?'

But I persisted in my efforts until he knew all there was to tell; he got rather out of patience before I had finished, and burst in with:

'How can you believe such awful rot? Nothing pleases a lot of gossiping old maids better than to try and take away a girl's character.'

The mystery of the tandem drives amused him immensely, and he expressed his intention of trying one of them if the lady would honour him by an invitation.

Next morning, as I expected, nothing would do but we must start for the Park links directly after breakfast, Fred said he was an enthusiastic golfer, and had promised Miss Van Houten to put in an early appearance. We got there by half-past ten; but in spite of the early hour, we found her already on the ground, hard at work practising putting on the home green. Well, we played steadily till mid-day, when our hostess insisted on our lunching with her. No sooner was the meal finished than we set to work again. About four o'clock I began to have had about enough. Really, it became a trifle slow for me, because you see Miss Van Houten is one of those golfers who requires advice concerning every stroke she plays, and as Fred's ball had a curious custom of invariably lying in close proximity to her's, he naturally was the one she usually applied to. So, having some letters to write, I cleared out and left them to it. Fred arrived at my house just in time for dinner, and I could see by his excited face the meshes were fast closing round him. Again I essayed to warn him, but this time he was round on me in a moment. 'Look here old chap!' he exclaimed, 'if you

don't mind, I would rather you didn't say anything more about Miss Van Houten. I intend to marry her if she will have me.'

What more could I say after this ?

During the next three days, I saw very little of my friend. I made a point of walking up to the links with him of a morning, and played a round or two just for appearance's sake ; but I never saw him again till dinner, and he was not always punctual for that. Of course, he made no end of apologies for his desertion of me, and equally, of course, it was an easy task to set his mind at rest on that score. I felt positively certain nothing I could say would alter the course he was pursuing, and finally I became so resigned, that I actually grew somewhat sympathetic with his love-lorn condition, and listened without demur to his enamoured dissertations which went on nightly from dinner till bedtime.

The climax was coming on at racing speed, and when, on the evening of the fourth day, he came in looking less jubilant than usual, I was quite prepared to hear he had made his cast, and been sent to the rightabout. However, it was not so bad as that, for after dinner he told me all about it.

'I got it over to-day, old chap,' he burst out, when we had settled down to our pipes.

'Hope I may congratulate you ?' I asked.

'Well, no, not exactly. You see it's like this. I got her to admit she liked me ; but when I pressed her for a direct answer, she told me I must be patient until to-morrow. I can't imagine why she couldn't put me out of my misery at once ; but I suppose she wants a little time to think it over, though of course, as I told her, she must have known it was coming. But to all my pleadings I got but one answer, wait till to-morrow. By-the-by, just as I was leaving, she asked me if I cared to go for a drive behind her tandem.'

'What !' I exclaimed, springing from my seat, 'a tandem drive ? You never accepted ?'

'Of course I did, old chap, and jolly glad to have the chance. Why, what on earth is the matter ?'

'Matter,' I cried, 'everything is the matter, and what's more you'll find it out to your cost before to-morrow night.'

'Oh, you mean that rot you told me about those other fellows who went for a tandem drive. Well, I simply don't believe there's anything in it, and, what is more, I'll prove I am

right before we are twenty-four hours older!' exclaimed my mettlesome friend, in a decidedly heated tone.

I had no desire to squabble with him, and it could hardly have been avoided had we kept to the subject, so we wisely changed the conversation into other channels, but Fred was desperately uninteresting, and it was easy to tell his thoughts were far away.

After breakfast on the following day, I excused myself for not going to the Park; however, Fred did not try to persuade me in the least, and after half a cigarette, he exclaimed: 'Well, I'm off; good-bye, old chap. Wish me luck. Don't suppose I shall be back till dinner.'

It was rather unkind of me, I'll admit, but I couldn't help venturing a laughing remark that very possibly his return might be somewhat earlier than he anticipated.

All that afternoon I was expecting to see him turn up with a woe-begone face, rejection written on every feature. My dismal forebodings, however, were not to be realised. The dinner hour arrived, but no Fred. After giving him fifteen minutes' law, I was just about to sit down when in he burst like a whirlwind. I guessed at once from his face and manner that he had been successful.

'Awfully sorry I'm so late. Couldn't possibly get here before. *It's all right!*' he cried, and dashed out of the room again.

I could hear him tearing up to his room, and in a marvellously short time he was dressed and seated opposite me. He was far too excited to eat, and no sooner had the servants left us to our wine than he burst out with what I could see all through dinner he was dying to impart.

'We are engaged, you old croaker! The day is settled, and I'm the happiest man alive.' Then, in a more sober voice, he added: 'But I say, look here, you were quite right about that tandem drive, there was a good deal more in it than I anticipated.'

After I had congratulated him and drunk health and happiness to the couple, he exclaimed:

'Now, old man, you must hear the whole story. I simply can't rest till I've told you, and I'm sure Nelly won't mind. I had better begin at the very beginning. So here goes:—When I got up to the Hall this morning, I found Nelly already waiting for me with her caddy bag, and forthwith we commenced work on the links. We had played one complete round and half

another before anything was mentioned, when as we were resting from our exertions, seated on the stump of a tree, I thought it a suitable opportunity to ask if the answer to my momentous question was ready. "No, sir," she answered with one of her delightful smiles, "I can't let you have it this morning. I may tell you it depends entirely upon our drive this afternoon." I couldn't imagine what she meant, and was half inclined to think she was chaffing me, but recollecting what you had told me, I ventured to ask for a further explanation. She made no objection, but continued: "Before we start this afternoon, I must ask your promise never to reveal anything which takes place during our drive, that is, provided I find myself unable to grant your request." "Well, you certainly can have my word for that," I interrupted; "but why all this mystery?" "The reason is this," she answered, "I have made a vow with myself never to marry until I can find a man whose courage is unflinching, and whose word of honour is proof against the trial I have laid down. In plain words, my object in taking you for a drive this afternoon—please do not think badly of me for this—is to test you." Well, I must say I did not half like the idea, not that I feared the test, but it seemed a cold-blooded affair, and hardly the sort of thing an ordinary girl, who cared for a man, would propose; but I knew Nelly was no ordinary girl, and I was absolutely certain she really cared for me at the bottom. Some men would have thrown the whole thing up there and then, looking on the test as an insult, and the girl who proposed it as cruel and unnatural. I must say such thoughts crossed my mind, but when Nelly's face took an imploring expression, and in begging accents she said, "Oh, please don't say you refuse to come with me!" why, I just felt as though I could have gone straight to the bottomless pit with her if she had wished it. But I couldn't help trying to get a little more information out of her concerning this momentous drive, so I didn't reply to her question, but asked her to tell me exactly what this particular test consisted of. "It is simply this," she replied, "you understand I have asked you to go for a tandem drive with me this afternoon in order to find out whether or no I can marry you." "Oh, yes, I quite understand that. But tell me what I shall have to do? I trust your answer does not depend on my ability to handle your team? for, as I think I told you before, I know nothing whatever about horses, have only driven a trap twice, and that with only one horse, and on

both occasions an accident happened. So, if you are going to ask me to drive, I shall certainly decline if you are to accompany me." "Oh, dear, no!" she laughed. "That's just the very thing I wish you *not* to do. What I require is your promise before we start that you will not attempt to touch the reins whatever may happen, and, further, should you break your word, that you will say good-bye there and then." "Oh, is that all?" I exclaimed, greatly relieved to find my task such an apparently easy one. "Well, you have my promise for everything. I gladly accept, and am content to abide by your decision. Touch the reins? Why, I value your life far too much to ever think of doing such a crazy thing. But, I say, Nell—I mean Miss Van Houten—please don't speak about saying good-bye, it's too awful to think about"—expect I looked frightfully unhappy when I said this, and she, too, seemed somewhat low-spirited at the idea, so we had quite a sentimental little interlude. After this was over it was time for lunch, so we left the links for the Hall. The dining-room clock was striking half-past two as the famous tandem passed the windows in the charge of two grooms, and took up its stand before the entrance doors. Our preparations were soon complete. I helped her up to her high driving box and took my seat beside her in the highest of spirits and prepared for anything. When outside the Park, we took the road leading to Musley, and then by way of Scorbridge to Hinkley. You see I remember the country, though it is now many years since I spent those jolly summer holidays with you at your father's place. Well, nothing happened up to Hinkley, and I began to think my task of sitting quietly chatting with my fair driver—who, as far as I am a judge, seemed to handle her team perfectly—was a delightfully pleasant and absurdly easy one. However, I was somewhat premature in my conclusion, for the fun was soon to commence. After passing through Hinkley, we turned sharp to the right and took the narrower lane leading on to Marden Moor. In a few minutes we emerged upon that sea of gorse and broom, where you and I as boys used to have such famous egg-collecting expeditions. I recollected every yard of the ground, and was delighted to find that old tumbledown deserted cottage, which served us as Robinson Crusoe's hut, had not altogether disappeared. Miss Van Houten's leader, however, did not appear quite so pleased with the interesting heap of ruins, for he shied at them violently, and succeeded in dragging his companion and the cart right out

of the track into the thick of the gorse bushes. My driver used her whip vigorously, but seemed quite unable to turn the frightened horse back on to the road. I fancied at the time her whip caught the unoffending wheeler as often as it did the plunging leader, and it seemed to me had the whip been kept in its socket, there would have been no difficulty in the matter. But of course my opinion remained unexpressed, as I don't profess to know anything of the art, and just then I had all my work cut out to keep my seat as the cart bumped and bounded amongst the bushes. Crack, crack, went the whip, raining down cut after cut. I really began to think my fair driver had suddenly taken leave of her senses. Unaccustomed to such rough handling the high-mettled cobs were soon at a tearing gallop, and it appeared to be only a question of seconds before the cart was overturned. All at once my driver ceased flogging, and taking both hands to the reins, exclaimed: "Oh, the little wretches. I believe they are bolting!" Well, by this time, I began to think I saw her move, and so, instead of offering to help her, I answered as cheerfully as possible, "Really! How exciting! Please don't stop 'em!" You can bet your life I had no intention of touching those reins, and I soon saw there was very little real danger of the cart upsetting, as the stunted gorse and heather over which we sped did not offer sufficient resistance to effect an overthrow. I also noticed, when an exceptionally large clump lay in our track, my driver always managed to steer clear of it. But talk about a small boat in a choppy sea, it was nothing to the motion of that cart. I felt Miss Van Houten had her eyes on me, and in spite of her apparent efforts with the reins, I could see she was making no real attempt to check her team, so I took a cigar out of my case—she had given me permission to smoke when we first started—and managed, by watching for a fairly level piece of ground, to get it lighted. In about ten or fifteen minutes it became apparent to me, if we kept on racing in the direction we were going, that we should speedily arrive at the edge of the Moor, where it makes an almost precipitous descent into Parling Vale, you know where I mean. But I took care not to give voice to my fears, and only wondered how near she intended to let the cobs go before she stopped them. On, on, we tore with no sign of slackening speed. The Vale now came in sight and lay spread out before us with its waving corn lands and bright green pastures. As we raced along, of course the slope of the Moor was not visible,



OF
ALBANY

We shot between the bushes

and it looked like a sheer drop. I must admit I began to get into a genuine funk when we came within four or five hundred yards of the edge, and I was terribly tempted to seize the reins and put a stop to the foolery. But I argued with myself that she could see perfectly well where she was going, I felt certain she had not yet really tried to stop her team, and for her own personal safety she would pull up in time. So I sat tight and kept my hands under command. On we raced, until it seemed—even if she attempted to stop them—she had put it off till too late. I had shut my eyes to await the seemingly inevitable crash—nothing could then have made me touch those reins—when the recollection of that track which leads down by a diagonal and easy descent to the valley below suddenly flashed on me, and I saw it was thither the apparently bolting team was being steered. You must know the place as well or better than I do, how the commencement of the descent is half hidden by a large clump of bushes, and anybody not being well acquainted with its position, could easily pass by without noticing it. In the old days it was so, but now it is even more hidden, for the track approaching it seems to be quite disused and is hardly distinguishable. I couldn't resist smiling as I saw Miss Van Houten take a real pull at the cobs when within twenty-five yards of what looked exactly like the brink of a precipice—the pace hardly slackened, but even the little I know of horses told me the team was at once under control, they came down to their bits, and answered perfectly as they were steered between the bushes. Down the easy gradient we tore, but the gallop was soon reduced to a trot and from that to a walk, so I quietly put my arm round Nelly's waist, for I knew the trial was over.'

Oh, yes, they were married, and within a month, too. They lived two years or so at Parlingham, when some bother connected with Mrs. Hain's property in America necessitated their leaving England. The last I heard from my old chum was that he and his wife were the happiest couple in existence, and had never had cause to regret the result of the Trial by Tandem.

MELTONIANA.

By TOM MARKLAND.

EVERY sportsman knows the painting or the engravings therefrom which depicts an episode in the Marquis of Waterford's career, wherein he and his boon companions are seen improving the nightly hours by obliterating tavern signs, &c. ; equally well known is the story of the escapade when they screwed up the door of the Thorpe toll-gate house, and shouted 'Gate !' whereupon the old toll-gate keeper failing to find egress by the usual route, went upstairs and rashly put his head and shoulders out of the bedroom window, only to find the Irishman ready on a ladder with a brush and a tin of red paint which he promptly brought into play upon his unsuspecting victim.

That toll-bar stood just outside of the town, a stone's throw from the 'Wheat Sheaf,' and was a thing of the past before I was a thing of the present ; but another Thorpe toll-gate arose which knew not the Marquis, and this was placed about a hundred yards on the Melton side of the point where the Grantham and Scalford roads part company. It was kept for years by an irascible old boy named Woodcock (no relation of the Rearsby family), and it was amusing to see the state of mind he was in when the whole field of hunters wanted to get through at once after losing a fox anywhere about the 'Doctor's Lane,' and hurrying to the 'spinneys' for a fresh one.

Generally came one or two of the young bloods with a couple of hundred guineas under them, and these would unlock the gate in like manner as Joe Hardy bridged the Eye by clearing it while the old man was fumbling for his keys. I never heard Woodcock use very pious language as they flourished their crops, and chaffingly called out, 'I'll remember you in my will, old boy !' or 'Give my kind regards to the missus,' &c. Some would take the hedge and evade the gate by clearing it further on into the road again ; but, of course, he got more than his due, for some would throw half-a-crown and never wait for change, and a very few half-a-sovereign, and think it was sixpence. One man in whom the business instinct was evidently strong, gave Neddy a half-crown, and when the latter coolly

pouched it without showing any signs of turning up the change, the City man said, 'Here, you can afford me a glass of ale out of that, I suppose, old cock.' 'See you d — first,' replied Neddy, 'them as has got brass has to pay for them as hasn't; it's up there on the rules, look for yourself.' Needless to state this was apocryphal; but when the 'Cit,' who was inclined to enter into the humour of the thing, paused to look over the regulations on the board over the toll-house door, he was greeted with such a chorus of 'Get on, you old counter-jumper;' 'Give him the board, Neddy, to study while we draw,' and so forth, that he had to give it up and jog along. Be it understood, Ned never unlocked the main gate, only the bridle one at the side.

Another time, a sweep on a donkey happened to come up at the same time as the hunters, and throwing his threepence on the ground at Neddy's feet, was riding on in majesty; but Ned's dignity would not have that at any price, he collared the donkey by both reins and turned him round, insisting that the sweep should dismount and pick up the coins. This tussle went on for some minutes amid roars from the assembled field, who didn't mind a slight delay so long as there was, what Paddy Maher called, a 'little divarsion,' as well. The hounds' sterns, however, were disappearing beyond the turn, so one of the impatient contingent took out a silver coin, and said, 'Here, Ned, take Smutty's toll and mine out of that.' Things then went on all right as far as the hunt was concerned; but 'Smutty' insisted on having the threepence out of the mud, as his fare had been paid by 'Sir George,' a claim which Neddy as stoutly refused on the principle that on a hunting day 'gettings were keepings.' The sweep was much the younger man of the two, but the other was a tough old stick, and having got hold of the 'brownies,' which he was not too squeamish to pick up when he had secured the other, he wouldn't part. That sweep and Ned had a standing feud on the point, to the latter's dying day; the sweep's donkey was not more obstinate than Neddy, who eventually died game. I shall never forget the morning, when, roused by the Ashfordby baker, we repaired to the toll-house and found him lying dead in a pool of blood just within the door. The story told itself as plainly as a canvas from the pencil of a great artist presents to the mind of the beholder some historic episode or pathetic scene in social life. The number of wounds the old man had received showed

clearly how stout a resistance he had made. The assassin's bullet did not do its work, so the knife was brought into play, and the old fellow was gradually weakened by loss of blood. It was in the very covert to which I have represented the hounds as proceeding on these occasions that the murderer betook himself for concealment in the first instance, a fact which was ascertained by means of bloodhounds supplied by the Mr. Woodcock of Rearsby, whose name occurs in the early portion of this article.

Bill Brown, or 'Peppermint Billy,' as he was called (and who had been convicted of horse-stealing on Woodcock's evidence, and was known to bear him a grudge), suffered the extreme penalty of the law for this cruel murder, and the toll-gate is like the other one where the Marquis performed as a hairdresser, a thing of the past ; but it lasted long enough to see another of its janitors killed by a runaway horse knocking a rotten post on him, and a third nearly killed by a midnight robber, who expected the week's tolls were on the premises, but found himself mistaken. It is a singular thing, but nevertheless true, that a few years after the removal of that house, I could not find anybody in the village who knew its *exact* site. *Sic transit gloria!* And how do you think *I* knew? Well, I should have been as uncertain as the rest ; but one day coming out of Robinson's Close with my brother, I wanted to empty my gun (a muzzle-loader) before taking it into the house. A bird flew right over the old toll-house, that is, it would have done so, but I brought it down, and it fell on the pavement in front of the door.

'That's a deuced long shot, old man,' remarked my brother ; 'eighty yards, I should think.'

'More like sixty,' I replied ; 'but that is a long shot, especially for a pigeon.'

As we maintained our opinions as to the length of the shot with some tenacity, we finally measured it with a Gunter's chain and found it sixty-five, so that fixed the scene of the murder as far as I am concerned.

Returning to the Melton Spinneys. (I really don't believe I differ much in propensity from reynard himself, I always like to hover about coverts.) In Will Charity's day, there were three years when that capricious bird, the starling, patronised the 'Spinneys' to an extent surpassing anything I have ever witnessed. Denser flocks may have been seen by other sports-

men, but those to which I allude are best described as a black cloud rising from the wide expanse of blackthorn, and the shadow they threw was deep enough to make you think a shower was approaching. All the ferrets in the vicinity had a high old time of it, and many of the poorer classes found them a very acceptable accompaniment to the Leicestershire bacon. I never tried them myself, because our people (when Will and I killed one hundred and eight at three shots), 'put their foot down.' 'No,' said they. 'We had quite enough of the snipe when you first learnt how to bring them down. It was snipe! snipe! snipe! And you might as well have lamb-tails to deal with in the kitchen.' I may observe for the information of urban readers that lamb-tail pie though toothsome when served, is one of the *bêtes noires* of the presiding geniuses in the culinary regions. Three cooks left over those snipe, so they never started on the starlings, but I am told they are none so bad 'for a' that.'

There were any amount of snipe about in those days, and barring wild duck, I suppose no class of shooting in lowland countries is more fascinating. You don't get on so well at first, but once you have the knack, there is no more difficulty in bagging a long-bill than in killing a partridge. That theory of waiting till you catch sight of the white under the wing is all nonsense: shoot your snipe as soon as you can. But whether it is in consequence of the increased drainage or the greater number of gunners disturbing them, of late years you do not find a leash where you used to find a wisp.

Adjoining the Melton Spinneys is a tract of land that belonged to Robert Sykes, Esq., through which flows the 'Scalford Brook,' and though I have not been to Priam's land, I'll warrant that not even the classic stream in Asia Minor meanders more. In a 'hard' winter it was a very paradise for the wild-fowl shooter. Many a good day have I had up that brook, but the amusing incident I want to tell has nothing to do with snipe-shooting. As the 'Belvoir' rode over this land of his, Mr. Bob Sykes considered himself entitled to beat the Spinneys when he chose. Old Cook was then custodian of the stronghold, and as he received half-a-sovereign every time they 'found' he was extremely jealous of anybody who disturbed the privacy of the vulpine denizens thereof.

Mr. Sykes came stalking through the covert one morning with the pointer he was so proud of—a pointer and retriever

rolled into one—and a cock-pheasant rose, which Bob accounted for correctly, but before he had bagged the game and prepared for a fresh start, Cook appeared on the scene like an old spider from his den.

‘Blank, blank, and blank! What do you mean by kicking up a row here when you know the hounds meet at Waltham to-morrow. If they draw blank I’ll tell ’em how it is.’

‘What are you going to tell them?’

‘Tell ’em. Why, as you’re always blazing and banging about the covert, and I can’t keep the foxes.’

‘Don’t you trouble yourself on that score,’ replied Bob. ‘A fox is a sporting animal, and a Leicestershire fox knows well that he has nothing to fear from a gun. That’s not why they draw the covert blank sometimes.’

‘What do you reckon it is, then?’

‘That ugly old figure-head of yours. It’s enough to turn a hard-run fox from an unstopped earth.’

This was rude on Bob’s part, and more than Cook could stand. He therefore ‘went for’ Bobby with his bayonet at the charge, the bayonet being a fork which he was carrying with which to prepare Reynard’s supper of sheep’s head and pluck. Ill would it have fared with the knight of the trigger had he been less active, but he shunned the spear like Bruce at Bannockburn, and the old curmudgeon went fork and all headlong into a thorn-brake, where he didn’t warble half so sweetly as some birds I have oft-times heard at the same spot.

He knew something about those thorns before he extricated himself, so he stumped off without renewing his attack on Bob, who had meantime withdrawn to a safe distance, but he growled out as he retired, ‘I can’t reckon a fellow like you up at all. You’re neither fish, flesh, nor good red-herring. I wouldn’t feed the foxes with you, d—— if I would.’

‘I’ll write to the Duke,’ retorted Bob; ‘and tell him that if he doesn’t get rid of an old mummy like you, I’ll wire every fence on my land!’ Just then the pointer, which was not particular as to the kind of game, started a bunny which Bob knocked over, and flinging it to old Cook told him to get it cooked for his supper, and sauntered away, leaving the irate covert-keeper to cool down as best he might.

Considering how bleak the situation is, Melton Spinney has always maintained a good reputation, though it is by no means a ‘Woodwell Head.’ You always stand a chance of a run, a

fact which one of our few radical farmers accounted for one day at the Bell by making the sarcastic remark that there would 'allus be foxes there as long as Bristowe's poultry bill was paid.' Bristowe's is the nearest farm, and he keeps a large head of feathered stock, which the 'rad' declared was the most paying part of his concern. There might be some little truth in the assertion, but Bristowe was the *beau idéal* of an Anglo-Saxon colonist, and would squeeze a living out of a plough farm, when the average Leicestershire farmer could not. I believe the covert's reputation was more due to the care which old Cook undoubtedly bestowed on keeping it quiet. The *feræ naturæ* soon grow shy of quarters where they are continually disturbed. This applies to all game, but more especially to hares, which are animals of exceedingly delicate nervous organization. It was foreseen by many experienced sportsmen that the Ground Game Acts would 'play the bear' with pussy, for whereas when only the landed proprietor and his friends had the right there was a day's shooting now and then with intervals of rest between, now the farmer and perhaps his son on their rounds are continually under the temptation to take dog and gun so as to combine business with pleasure. Hence the hares that don't migrate to quieter regions breed at a much diminished rate. No better example of this could be given than the contrast afforded by Sykes' little estate above referred to, and the Deepdales. These lie on opposite sides of Scalford Road, though neither quite verges on it, and Sykes' fields along that meandering brook I mentioned, look better holding ground for hares than anything on the Deepdales, but where you could find one hare on the former, you might any time find a dozen on the latter. Why? Because Sir Francis Grant shot over the Deepdales with a few friends some seven or eight days in a season; whereas Mr. S., having nothing else to do, was daily popping about his land. I don't think hares ought to have been included in the act. Rabbits we have always with us, even if the stock gets low it is easy to get it up again; but not so with hares, and unless some measures are taken forthwith the museums had better provide themselves with stuffed specimens of 'pussy.' The only other chance for the perpetuation of the species lies in the maintenance of cordial relations between coursing clubs and the occupiers of the land. Perhaps I am sounding the alarm a little too loudly. When the worst comes to the worst, you will say there will be hares at Altcar, and foxes at Belvoir, but everybody can't live at either place.

The love of sport is not confined to the dwellers in any particular locality, and I feel sure that unless steps are taken the greater part of England will soon be on a par with the Gallic district to which the Maire invited a brace of Britons for 'le sport.' On their inquiring what the preserves were like, they received an answer about as encouraging as the one John Squirrel gave us at Welby ('Fower bards and one old hare'), for the Frenchman wound up his glowing account of the wonders his guests might expect in the shape of blackbirds, &c., with this peroration : *'And, gentlemen, you should hear of the hare I shot last season !'*

It is years now since Bob passed away, but we may never see a man in Leicestershire who will contentedly walk as many miles after so little game as he would. I never saw him fairly tested as a marksman, for all shooting men will agree with me that you don't show your form so well when game gets up about once an hour, as when there is a fair sprinkling, and I only shot with him on the Sahara referred to. He was a tall, well-built man, but change the three positions as you will, carrying a gun for a long time without a shot stiffens the muscles and puts you at a disadvantage when at last game *does* start.

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO !

By 'PECKWATER.'



SCARCELY, nowadays, do we see the pure old English game fowls. Years ago, farmers and cottagers used to breed them most carefully, and valued highly the strains of blood they possessed. A beautiful bird, with his proud, defiant carriage, was the black-breasted red—or all black—gamecock. See him in the midst of a cluster of game hens and pullets, perfect in elegance of form and bearing, and you could not help admitting them to be a group of Nature's own aristocracy. Then, with what courage would one of these hens guard her brood of chickens from the attacks of vermin, rather apt, perhaps, to wander with her charge too far away from the homestead in search of the food which the fields and hedgerows furnish in natural abundance for the growing chicks ; still, with their fearless mother ever ready to fight to the death in their defence, they were safe from the

attacks of any ordinary enemy. Again: talk of table fowls, never have any been introduced that equal in quality and quantity of flesh in proportion to their weight the old English game fowl.

The texture and flavour of this meat may be favourably compared with that of a wild-reared pheasant, and is so evenly distributed over the best parts, that you may cut at the plump breast and come again after a fine, close-grained liver wing has been detached for the gratification of some favoured epicure. Now, this is more than can be claimed for many of the improved breeds which modern fancy has laboured to develop.

But, practically speaking, this grandest of all breeds of fowls, as farmyard poultry, is now extinct. The modern game fowl of the poultry show, breeders of the old school would regard with intense disgust, every quality for which the English breed was famous, having been sacrificed to the distorted fancies of the show judges of the day. The old breed, however, is now coming into favour with a few fanciers, as the following extract from a recent report of the poultry show of the Bath and West of England Society at Guildford shows:—

‘Modern Game contained the usual assortment of hard-feathered, long-limbed, and long-necked birds, which call for no special comment. The two classes for old English Game were splendid, scarcely an inferior bird in the whole lot. The first prize bird, Mr. Barnes’ magnificent white-legged black-red cock, added another to his many victories. He is built on splendid lines, good back, broad breast, good lean head, and brilliant eye, and stands on capital legs and feet.’—From the *Live Stock Journal*.

But it must be allowed that, apart from the intrinsic value of this breed, the old English sport of cockfighting was the prevailing inducement for its maintenance in all its perfections of form and purity of blood. A cockpit seems to have been a frequent adjunct to royal palaces and noblemen’s establishments; the palace at Whitehall, for instance, where His Majesty’s privy council used to sit in a room called the ‘Cockpit,’ built on the site of the old pit belonging to that edifice. A racing calendar, also of 1736, contains reports of thirty-nine cock matches fought at various meetings of from forty to fifty cocks aside, with stakes of from ten to forty guineas each battle, and from two hundred to fifty guineas on each main.

But, however fashionable this pastime may have been in

bygone days, one must speak of it now with bated breath, for we live in goody-goody times. Lord Macaulay said : ' We know of no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality.' One of those gushing periods of arrant cant and hypocrisy is upon us now, the Prime Minister and his Derby winner having given the finishing touch to the pile of iniquity which sportsmen of all degrees have been rearing. ' Sport shall be put down,' say the mugwumps ; still, it takes people of many sorts to make up the world, so, for a time, we may be able to keep our own line unmolested, and even produce a paper descriptive of cockfighting without fear of the pillory.

In various counties the breed of game fowls were of distinct colour and character ; but it is with the black-breasted red that we personally had to do, and of which we propose to give a few experiences.

Formerly, an association existed in our county to maintain and extend the breeding of this class of fowls for fighting purposes. The system adopted was as follows :—A cock and a few hens, all of the purest strains, were put down at various farms or with cottagers, who had runs for poultry apart from all other fowls. Towards autumn, the most promising cockerels were selected from the various broods and brought to a farm with suitable buildings, to which were attached several grass paddocks. Here, under the watchful eye of an experienced manager, the young birds would grow towards maturity. To prevent them fighting, an old stagbird—a cock, probably, that had come off victorious in some main—was set to run with them, and, improbable as it may seem, it is a fact, that this veteran would never allow any serious battle to take place among the youngsters ; whenever a quarrel began, he would rush to the spot and separate the combatants with a blow from his wings, as much as to say, ' I'll stand none of this nonsense, you'll have enough of this game hereafter !' In the course of the spring, the best grown young cocks were sent singly to walks with farmers who could keep them with a few hens apart from their ordinary stock of poultry. After a while, these cocks were taken up, and if of suitable form, were placed under the care of a professional trainer or feeder.

Now, each bird would have his separate run, and would be fed on hard corn, such as the best oats and barley, wheat and peas—being too heating for general feed—would only be given in

the final stage of training. Besides this allowance of corn, underdone meat—beef or horseflesh—carefully minced, would be given, and in order to keep the young prizefighters in wind and sparring practice, they would be frequently indulged in a set-to with other birds, but not be allowed to injure one another. From these occasional bouts the trainer would be able to judge of the comparative cleverness and quickness of his pupils, some birds having an extraordinary natural aptitude for both giving and avoiding punishment, and are as superior in their tactics as a champion lightweight would show himself to be in a set-to with some raw countryman. For quick fighting and clever hard striking, a bird of from four and a half to five pounds was preferred to a heavier, and, therefore, a slower fighting-bird of six pounds or more; but the blood was the essential quality, as it always proves itself to be when ‘to the death’ is the issue of the combat.

I had walked several birds for the association, with the result that my ordinary fowls were vastly improved by the infusion of game blood. I was always anxious to learn the fate of my various *protégés* when trimmed for battle in the pit, so it was suggested by the head of the firm that I should go with him to Birmingham, and see a main fought against Shropshire in the week following. I assented conditionally, and fixed to drive over to my friend’s house and go on with him the next morning to the midland metropolis.

I had stipulated that we should spend a rational afternoon and evening, with ‘no confounded nonsense,’ for I must explain that my dear little friend was rather eccentric in his habits and mode of conducting himself, especially when he had a lot of young fellows round him. A more lovable, kind-hearted little chap (peace be with him!) never breathed, clever and accomplished, and with means that would have enabled him to take a good position, yet he could never bring himself to settle down in the prescribed paths of county life and associations. Truly original in all his conceptions, he strictly took a line of his own in all things. ‘The Marquis,’ we called him, for when in his right mind, he carried himself with an air of distinction peculiar to men of small stature. To see him drive into the town on a Saturday afternoon, with his fine-actioned chestnut horse and stylish trap, you might ask, What swell is that? But if you had seen him on his return journey, after perhaps a late dinner at the club, and a long evening at billiards, you would expect

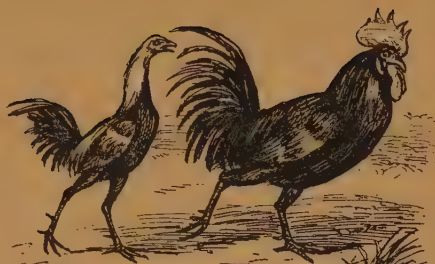
to hear of his having broken his neck, for a more reckless, mad-brained driver on such occasions, particularly if he had persuaded some nervous friend to accompany him home, has never held the reins since the days of Jack Mytton.

A charming place the 'Marquis' owned, built on the banks of a delightful trout and salmon river, and surrounded by large rich meadows ; there was no property in the neighbourhood that could be compared with it. A very great pleasure it used to be to visit him when one felt assured that that fine old port with which his cellars were richly stocked, would be brought up with strict moderation ; but after I had accepted his invitation on this last occasion, sundry visions of the past rose before me, which made me half repent of my decision. My previous summons to dine and sleep at his house was accompanied by the assurance that everything would be conducted on the most decorous lines, as several seniors of good standing would be of the company. These guests, however, left early, and then was ushered in one of those *noctes*, more readily remembered than described. My memory retained an early morning scene, in which three youths in evening dress figured, swimming about in the fish pond close to the gardens in pursuit of a pair of call ducks. A glorious duck hunt they proclaimed it to be, but as one of the trio got entangled in some weeds, and was dragged out half drowned, this was a frolic not likely to be repeated.

Another set had explored the farm buildings, and finding a Jersey bull tied up in one of the stalls, had sent one of their party to the house to fetch a large hand-bell from the hall table ; this, with a piece of cord, they attached to the bull's tail, then, on turning him loose, they were surprised to see him rush slap through the farmyard fence, and gallop off with mad bellowings towards the village ; luckily, no one was abroad at that time of morning, and the poor brute did no harm. He was found afterwards in a large wood close at hand, and for some hours defied all efforts to dislodge him. But all these buffooneries, I imagined, might now be considered out of date, and the afternoon and evening we spent confirmed me in this idea. A steady-going friend was staying in the house, and we had just declared we would have no more wine, and had asked our host to give us a song or two before retiring for what we hoped would be a good night's rest, when a dogcart drove up, and three nice boys broke in upon our repose. Our host had not



WITH A CLUSTER OF HENS



COCK OF THE WALK



OFF TO BATTLE



NATURES OWN ARISTOCRACY



A FIGHT TO THE DEATH



VANQUISHED



Cock-a-doodle-do!



VICTOR

CHAMPION

told us that he expected these youngsters, who had really fixed to go with him to see the sport next morning. This accounted for his unusual abstemiousness, as he knew he would have his work cut out later on. Then several others came in to talk over the prospects of the morrow's encounter, and we began to spend the evening in earnest. Several decanters of the noted port, which we had firmly declined to partake of, were placed on the table with an air of triumph by our host. 'You thought to cheat me of my port, did you?' he whispered to me. We saw it was of no use to remonstrate, so we accepted the inevitable, and took our whack with the rest.

'A nice preparation for to-morrow,' I ventured to suggest, as we adjourned to the smoking-room, where tables had been set out for whist and loo.

'Don't you turn wet blanket ; it's of no use your thinking of bed !' the little man replied, rejoicing at the success of his manœuvre ; and I knew too well he meant what he said.

After an interval for supper we played on—the stakes were moderate, and no harm was done ; then it was proposed that we should have a stroll in the meadows and go down to the river to see if any salmon were trying to pass the weir. It was a beautiful June morning, and the freshness of the early dawn was most invigorating. It was in one of these meadows, or hams, as they are locally styled, that a noted man of science living near fancied he had made a most striking discovery. At certain seasons after heavy rains, he had observed at night lights flitting close to the ground, which, after prolonged study, he pronounced to be *ignes fatui*, or 'Will o' the wisps,' peculiar to these damp, low-lying meadows. He wrote several most learned treatises on the subject, and was held in high repute by the scientific world for his unique investigations. But shortly he was fated to receive a serious shock, since, on mentioning the subject to an old fisherman, who, he thought, might have also noticed these apparitions, he was mortified to learn that the abnormal effects were produced by the fishermen's wives and children scouring the meadows at night with lanterns in search of lobworms, which were used as bait for their eel-baskets, or putcheons. On this particular morning, our party encountered none of these weird phenomena ; but, in the large common meadow next the river, they came upon what served their humour better, and this was a large collection of horses of all descriptions depastured thereon.

'Let's have a ride,' cried one, a suggestion which was quickly carried into practice. Several horses were easily secured as they arose lazily from their resting places, and were speedily mounted by those who were game for a wild gallop. The 'Marquis' had caught one wearing a headstall, and evidently of better class than the others.

'Hold him tight while I jump on!' he told the man at his head. He was no sooner seated than another lunatic vaulted up behind him, and off they went. This second horseman was a man who could ride anything, and he kept the 'Marquis' in his place. Round the meadow they raced, distancing all competitors, and then made straight for the river. 'We're going straight for the weir—close to it!' gasped the 'Marquis.'

'Are we, begad?' was the answer from No. 2, who pushed himself back on to the horse's croup, then, throwing his right leg well over, he caught the mannikin in front of him with the side of his foot, and knocked him clean off the horse's back, rolling off himself in effecting this dexterous movement. It was managed just in time, for in a few more strides the horse had reached the river's brink. Down the steep bank he went a regular header, and into the torrent from the weir, down which he was carried to the shallows below, from which he easily regained the side and joined his companions, seemingly none the worse for his plunge.

We picked the 'Marquis' up, half stunned and shaken considerably; it was rather rough on him to be knocked off his perch in this fashion, but it was the best thing his mate could have done, for no doubt they would have all gone over the bank and headlong into the river. The giant of the party carried the little man up to the house on his back, and we put him to bed without any opposition on his part, and then were free to snatch an hour or two's rest ourselves, which was more than we had hoped for. After a header into the icy cold plunging bath, and a hurried breakfast, we were on the road for the station, arriving at the 'Hen and Chickens,' that best of all provincial hotels, in time for a luncheon, which made new men of us. The birds had been smuggled into the building secured for the main in safety, arriving in a furniture van in the early morning; but it had required a liberal distribution of the circulating medium to square those who had the power of interfering with our proceedings. We were directed to approach the scene of

action as quietly and 'permiscuous-like,' as possible, so as not to attract notice, and this we did.

On entering the building, we found the old hands at the game, from far and near, had assembled early. The company was confined strictly to those in the know, and friends who could be trusted, as a glance round this strange fraternity convinced me. There were old stagers from Staffordshire and the black country, who secured places round the pit with capacious bags, full of silver, before them ; these men meant business, and staked their money freely on every battle, laying and taking odds on or against the bird of their choice, the betting varying every moment at times, as one or other seemed to get the upper hand.

The 'Marquis' was now himself again, although suffering from a stiff neck, which at times affected him most ludicrously. He had provided a brand new silk bag, with his coat of arms emblazoned thereon, in which he personally carried each bird from the pens, and placed it for examination as to the fairness of heeling, *i.e.*, of the spurs being properly adjusted, in the feeder's hands ; by him it was handed to the setter for his side. A great deal seemed to depend on the skill of the setter in the form in which he placed his bird to offer battle, and, again, in picking him up when either his own spurs were stuck fast in its adversary's body or *vice versa*.

An old burly Staffordshire man, on seeing the gaudy silk bag, exclaimed, 'Well, meeister, yon is a brave bit of silk, but ye moind the old saying, "Many a good cock comes out of a ragged bag," and I hope your birds are as game as your silk !' The feeders were : Booth for Shropshire, and Preece for our county.

On the first bird being brought in on each side, the business began with 'Booth a pound !' 'Preece a pound !' 'Done ! done !' was invariably shouted when any one offered to back our man. Soon, 'I'll give a shilling for a pound !' two shillings ! three, or more, was shouted, Shropshire being evidently favourites for money, and rightly, too, for their birds were, I should say, of an older and more uniform strain than ours, and from their square, powerful build, better able to inflict punishment. In the first battle, I felt quite bewildered by the rapidity and force of the blows administered by the combatants, and was unable to distinguish between the two, with such dash did they deal their murderous strokes. Setting them to fight, indeed ; they did

not require much encouragement. Many of the battles were quickly decided ; a stroke as of lightning from the sharp, silver-plated steel spur dealing a deadly blow through the head or throat, from which there was no recovery.

Where body blows—or in the fleshy part of the neck—were inflicted, the struggle was more protracted, and one felt that the sport was akin to butchery. One of our birds only showed the white feather, refusing to face his opponent in the most cowardly fashion. This one must have had some dunghill blood in his veins, for his was the only case I saw of craven cowardice. The battle I was most excited over was that in which the cock I had walked last was our champion. Not that I should have recognised my favourite in his war paint, although I pressed forward into the rank next the cockpit. ‘I’ll back you, my friend,’ I said, ‘just for old friendship’s sake.’ And when ‘I’ll give two shillings for a pound,’ was shouted, I took the odds two or three times, with ‘Preece’ for choice.

At first the battle was evenly contested, give and take being the order of the fight, but I could see that my bird was being struck with greater precision than his returns showed. Then he received a stab through the neck, and began to bleed profusely from his beak. Still, he struggled gamely on, although at times nearly choked by the flow of blood. Weaker and weaker he seemed to get, in spite of all his efforts to pull himself together, and then his strength gave way, and he sank down on his side helpless and dying. I was awfully excited during this contest, and moved almost to tears at the sufferings of my quondam favourite and pet. Now the victor’s setter began the usual count, at the end of which, if the bird showed no power to resume the fight, he would then be taken off vanquished. Cries rose of ‘I’ll pound him ! I’ll pound him !’ *i.e.*, lay a pound to a shilling against him. I took several offers in my despair. ‘Pooh ! it’s a pound to a cancelled postage stamp,’ remarked a bystander. Half the count had been got through, the victor was standing over his fallen enemy, and occasionally pecking him ; now he utters a crow of triumph. This challenge seems to recall the departing spirit of the dying, for in one supreme effort he springs upon his vaunting foe, with a vivid flash from his spurs. A struggling mass swims before my eyes ; for the life of me I can’t discern which is my champion. Ah ! they are locked together ; the setters rush in ; but why do they delay in parting the fighters ? Because there was no need

to hurry now, for both are dead. My brave bird's last stroke pierced his victor's brain, but, vanquished though he were, he died a hero, 'Sans peur et sans reproche.' (Curtain.)

This was the last match between separate counties of which I have any knowledge ; the provinces got too warm for us, but several mains were fought in London between this county and other breeders. Then a ludicrous blunder on the part of our chief manager put an end to the sport generally, as far as we were concerned.

A match had been arranged with some breeders at Newmarket to come off in the Fives Court, near the Haymarket. There had been considerable difficulty in bringing off a main some time before, so now it was more than ever necessary to use the greatest caution, and to admit only those that were interested in the match to escape interruption, which might involve arrest, with perhaps extreme penalties. The individual in question we named 'Lord Bluster,' owing to his self-asserting qualities. He was well-known as a sportsman, and had now assumed the chief management of affairs with much more successful results than heretofore. He had come up to town the day before the fixture, and was staying at the Tavistock, where he became acquainted with a nice, gentlemanly sort of man, who professed a thorough knowledge of sport of all kinds. After luncheon they drove down to Tattersall's together ; the stranger examined several horses, and bid for some, but with such a margin that none were knocked down to him. Our friend was only too ready to give his opinion on the points and soundness of the horses selected, and before leaving the yard, it was agreed that they should meet later on and dine together.

During dinner, and over their wine, they had exhausted all sporting topics, so the countryman confidentially proposed to his friend to show him a bit of sport he no doubt had had no experience of, and that was—a cockfight.

'Most delighted ; the very thing I have been longing to see and have never before had the opportunity,' was the reply.

'Then, if you will meet me at the Fives Court to-morrow, at twelve o'clock, I will pass you in !' was the rejoinder.

The stranger kept his appointment, and was admitted. The second battle had begun, when a disturbance was heard at the entrance ; the stranger moved towards it. In a few seconds after, the company found themselves surrounded by a strong force of

policemen, with the sporting stranger, *alias* detective, at their head. 'Bluster' at first showed fight.

'It won't pay, Mr. S——, you had better all come quietly!' and they did so, appearing in batches at Bow Street from cabs which had considerably been provided for their convenience. They escaped this time with heavy fines and an emphatic warning, but our gamecock's challenge was never answered again.

SIXTY YEARS OF THE TURF.

By T. DYKES.

UNDoubtedly the best judge of a thoroughbred in England,' said the Hon. Francis Lawley, in a recent article, 'is Mr. Joseph Osborne ('Beacon'), the editor and proprietor of the *Horse Breeders' Handbook*;' and further adds the well-known Turf historian, 'and if he could only be induced to write his reminiscences of the old Irish Turf Club, of which he was one of the original founders, they would prove most interesting to all lovers of racing and steeplechasing, extending as they do over the whole of that "Wild Waterford" period every Irishman at the Curragh likes to talk about.' A few of these reminiscences, as told to us by the veteran himself in his quiet home at East Dulwich, ranging as they do over a period of sixty-two years, may therefore be acceptable, seeing that they appear for the first time in print.

Born in the first week of October, 1810, nine months after Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Osborne is now in his eighty-sixth year. The best part of his life has been spent in connexion with race-horses and steeplechasers, but in his youth he saw a good deal of hunting, his father having kept a pack of hounds in the county of Meath, where are situated the family acres at Dardiston Castle. The Osbornes are of English descent, the founder of the Irish family having crossed to Ireland in the time of Charles II. They married into the O'Ryan's, an ancient and once powerful race, and in due time became as Irish as themselves. The father of the present Mr. Osborne was educated at the Roman Catholic College at Ascot, in England, where he formed an attachment to the Duke of Buckingham, to whom he subsequently acted as *aide-de-camp*.

Coming into a tidy little fortune of 15,000*l.* on the latter's death, Mr. Osborne developed the family taste for horses and the national sport. His stud at first was small but select, and he managed half-a-dozen others on the half-stakes partnership principle. Under his old colours of white body, scarlet sleeves and cap, changed two years afterwards to yellow-and-white cap, he won several good races with Percy and Irish Lass at the Curragh, Bray, Bellewstown, and other meetings. Possibly the first good mare he owned was Lady Elizabeth, which in 1834 ran a good race against Colonel Westenra's Freney, by Roller out of Promise, then the best horse in Ireland, and a five-pounds better horse, in Mr. Osborne's opinion, than the famous Birdcatcher, which he declares was only five pounds better than his own mare, Maria. It was the latter that fairly broke Birdcatcher's heart. This was in the Wellington Stakes, at The Curragh September meeting in 1836, when the son and daughter of Sir Hercules were both three-year-olds. Mr. Osborne's filly carried 6 st. 12 lb., and Mr. Disney's chestnut 7 st. 7 lb., the public laying odds of 6 to 4 on the latter. They ran head and head for a mile amidst terrific excitement, the mare winning by the shortest of heads on the post, and 'poor Birdcatcher was never the same horse afterwards.' 'It broke his heart,' says Mr. Osborne.

Mr. Osborne has naturally much to say of the good old days at the Curragh, when he was one of the original members of the Irish Turf Club, and of which he is now one of the few survivors. The old colours of the Marquis of Donegal, garter blue body, bluff sleeves and cap; the Clanricarde straw-coloured body, mazarine blue sleeves and cap; the Marquis of Sligo's white satin body, crimson sleeves and cap; and the green jacket and green, white, and gold cap of Colonel Westenra, of the Scots Fusilier Guards, son of Lord Rossmore—were often to be seen out with his own in many a hot equine tussle. Of Lord Sligo Mr. Osborne has much to say in admiration, as it was his lordship who first advised him as to the importance of in-breeding, saying, 'You cannot have too much Waxy,' just as nowadays they say 'You cannot have too much Birdcatcher and Touchstone. In 1837 or 1838 Lord Sligo introduced Economist into Ireland, and 'You can see,' he observes, 'what Harkaway, the son of Economist and Fanny Dawson, has done for the race-horse through King Tom.' 'It was in the Club, in 1838 or 1839, that I first met the late Prince Batthyany, little dreaming at the time that the Prince would breed the great St. Simon, whose

great-grandsire on the dam's side, as most people know, was Harkaway.'

It was in what is called 'Plenipo.'s' year (1834)—Plenipo. being short for Plenipotentiary—that Mr. Osborne saw his first St. Leger. 'We had,' he says, 'at the Curragh that year a big, rakish horse, which was engaged in the race, called Bran, we much liked. He had won the Spring St. Leger at York, beating amongst others Buccaneer; also the 30-Guineas Stakes, in front of Cotillon, Inheritance, and a lot more good horses. There were twelve of us, who formed into a party; all of us backed the horse, and we had one bet of 4000*l.* to 100*l.* We drove from Holyhead through Derbyshire, and witnessed the race from our coach on the Town Moor. It was a grand sight then, there being five hundred coaches, all ranged where last year (1894), I am sorry to say, I saw as many betting-stands in the same places. I well recollect, when going round to the back, being asked by the notorious "Crutch" Robinson, "Meester Oosboorne, what's a goin' to win?" "You'd better back Bran," I said. "What, *me bock* a hoorse, Mister Oosboorne?" was the reply, as if backing was a veritable sin; whilst all the time, leaning on his crutch, he laid the odds as fast as the money was brought to him. Bran only got second to the celebrated Touchstone.'

In 1837 Mr. Osborne resolved to see the Derby. The guest of his old friend, Colonel Westenra, in Park Lane, he was riding down to Epsom on the morning of the big race, but got into difficulties with the finger-posts on the Kingston road. Explaining his position to a gentleman who came up on a stylish hack, attended by a pad-groom, the gentleman said, 'I am going to Epsom; you can ride with me.' Talk ran on racing subjects, and Mr. Osborne soon found, from the conversation, that he was alongside Admiral Rous (then staying with Mr. Harvey Coombe), who told him his brother's (Lord Stradbroke's) horse had a good chance of winning. The winner, however, turned up that year in the outsider Phosphorus, against which odds of 40 to 1 were laid. It is a matter of notoriety now that Phosphorus was practically not in the race, a letter to scratch him never having been delivered by a servant, who more than likely had backed him.

It was not till the year that Potentate won the Goodwood Cup (1840), that Mr. Osborne first became connected with journalism. On Beggerman, which started favourite at 3 to 1 against, he stood to win a good stake, but it did not come off. The close

proximity of the Goodwood to the Solent was suggestive of a main-sheet-haul style of riding—but no matter. Mr. Osborne's last 500*l.* was gone, and he was to some extent a 'beggarman' himself, like a good many more. That race occasioned many hard sayings and heart-burnings. On the way home from Goodwood he rapped at the door of Mr. Vincent Dowling, editor of *Bell's Life*, who was a very old friend, and Mr. Osborne did not hesitate to communicate the position in which Beggarman's defeat had left him. 'Why not report the Curragh Autumn meetings for us?' said Mr. D.; 'you can do that for *Bell's*, and we'll see about the future.' The result of all this was that Mr. Osborne was appointed Curragh correspondent at a salary of 200*l.* a-year. With this and some horses under his care, he pulled through again.

Though successful on the flat on both sides of the Channel, it is as one of the old-time steeplechasers of the celebrated Waterford period that he is best known. Going down to Shrewsbury in the mail-coach, Mr. Osborne's father was somewhat fascinated with one of the leaders. This was a mare called English Lass, by a horse belonging to the Duke of Cleveland called Hit-or-Miss, the pedigree of which could not be traced, though most likely thoroughbred. The family tact and judgment was displayed in the buying, for she only cost 40*l.* Put to Ishmael, she bred for Mr. Osborne Abd-el-Kader, a game, gallant little horse, 15.2, with deep shoulders and long quarters, which was entered for the Grand National at Liverpool. Ridden by Cavanagh in a steeplechase at Lincoln the same week, he was unsuccessful. In the same race Mr. Brigg's Hope was most resolutely ridden by a young farmer called Chris Green, and Mr. Osborne engaged him to ride his horse for the big Liverpool engagement. They got through in good time, and all the party attended the theatre in the evening. Henry Russell's famous song, 'There's a good time coming, boys!' then all the rage, was sung, and the party accepted it as a lucky omen. Next day the horse, well ridden by Green, won by a length from Knight of Gwynne, Lord Waterford's Sir John being third. The horse was not very heavily backed, a few bets being put on him at 100 to 3 while running.

Next year, 1851, the horse was a much stronger favourite, but Mr. Osborne fancied Sir John. Old Jemmy Barber worked the commission, as he also did for Mr. Higgins's Maria Day. 'I have executed the commission for both of you without either of

you knowing it,' said Jemmy to the respective owners. 'You stand to win 10,000*l.* each, and you'd better stand in a thou with each other.' Mr. Osborne, however, was standing in 500*l.* with Lord Waterford over Sir John. Mr. Tom Abbott, a hard-riding Yorkshire farmer, rode Abd-el-Kader. He could scarcely get down to the weight, and had to sail without colours, in his shirt, breeches, and a big pair of hunting boots with two spare pounds of leather about them. 'If he had only told me it was a near thing, I would have had a pair of racing boots made for him ; but he was a wild, jovial fellow, and did not let me know till the last moment.' He won a clinking race by a short head from Maria Day, a length behind which was Sir John. This was the first time the Grand National had ever been won twice by the same horse, and the Irish party were in ecstasies. It was Friday night, however, and printers were waiting ; 'so,' says Mr. Osborne, 'I had to shut myself up in a railway compartment and write a full description of how my horse won, while all the others were enjoying themselves.' Mr. Osborne is very proud of this journalistic feat, and points with pride to his description of the chase in which no fewer than thirty-three horses took part. The description should stand as a model to any young reporter who is anxious to excel in his profession, every event, detail, and accident being fully described ; but these are the days of telegraphs, and the modern reporter in a railway compartment would expect to buy his description in an evening paper half-way home to town. 'Could Abd-el-Kader jump?' we ask. 'Jump!' says Mr. Osborne, putting his two hands on the table and shifting the left forward so as to make an imaginary flight of hurdles ; 'he would be over these three fences before any other horse could clear the first two.'

In 1859 Mr. Osborne crossed the Channel to England, and entered upon an important position at headquarters. The old *Bell's Life Office* opposite the 'Spotted Dog' in the Strand, few would recognise in its sober front as headquarters of the *Exchange and Mart*. It was in the back-room of 'The Dog,' the chronicles of which would fill a volume in itself, that all the first and final deposits for 'The Belt,' as well as other matches pugilistic and pedestrian, were made, and there, on the nights before the 'great events,' was many a merry mill which did not come into the columns of *Nunquam Dormio*. Mr. Osborne's first vaticinatory article, signed 'Beacon,' was on the eve of the Cambridgeshire, and advised by an Irish friend,

Copperthwaite, who had seen the English running, he would have sent the actual winner in Red Eagle, belonging to his namesake, Mr. John Osborne, which started at 50 to 1; Mr. Ned 'Adamas' Smith, then on the paper, declared, however, for another, and the paper went by the latter. Mr. Osborne has had several journalistic ventures of his own. At the Curragh he had a racing calendar, which was literally 'shot from under him,' nearly all of his subscribers being killed in the Indian Mutiny. In conjunction with the late Mr. Tyrell, 'Amphion,' he founded the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*. For years he has written to the leading sporting press, latterly chiefly on horse-breeding, on which he is the undoubted authority. He was also a valued contributor to the *Sporting Gazette* (*County Gentleman*) during Mr. Naylor's proprietorship, when he gave Lord Clifden for his selection for the Derby; Macaroni, of which Mr. Naylor, as owner, naturally knew something, was placed above it by 'Pavo,' then also on the paper, and so they finished, first and second; but Lord Clifden, at 60 to 1, was the best tip.

Mr. Osborne is, for his age, a man of wonderful pluck and vigour. In the November of 1892, then in his eighty-second year, he crossed to Sligo, bought the thoroughbred horse Duncombe for an American gentleman, and under his own charge brought him safe across to Liverpool, and saw him shipped off to California. Altogether it has been given to few men to see so much of the ins-and-outs of the British Turf world during the nineteenth century; and to be able to converse with him about Birdcatcher, Harkaway, and other genuine horses of the past, as he saw them struggling against horses of his own breed and superintended for their engagements by himself, is a treat which is given to few. As a judge of thoroughbreds he has possibly no equal, and it is almost an education in itself to be present with him at show or sale. Of course, having seen all the noted sires and dams from which they are descended, he knows at once whether they are true to their line of breeding. In a young colt he perceives the colts of long, long ago; and we recollect him asking us at Marden Deer Park sale if a promising one was not the exact counterpart of Bay Middleton. When he looked over the Bay, however, we were an unknown and unexpected quantity. Like all good judges, he rarely looks twice at anything that is very common, but indications of particular strains will cause him to halt, and he is as partial to a little Sweetmeat or other favourite blood as a child is to sugar candy. His *Handbook* he has just

completed after much trouble. It contains pedigrees of ninety-three stallions, including seven from Welbeck, amongst others Carbine, the importation of which into this country by the Duke of Portland he is as proud over as he was bitterly opposed to the bringing back of Ormonde.

Curiously enough, three and a half years ago at the Marden Deer Park sale, when the writer introduced Mr. Osborne to Mr. McCulloch, the great Australian horse and stock importer, and for whom many years ago, when editing the *Clydesdale Stud-book*, we tried to purchase the celebrated Clydesdale stallion, General Neil, a Musket mare was just being brought into the ring. 'Now, there's your sort,' we said to the Australian gentlemen, of whom there was a group. 'Oh, no!' was the reply; 'just what we do *not* want; we have plenty of Musket blood through Carbine already.' After hearing a warm eulogy of Carbine, we thought it a pity that his blood should have to go a-begging, and wrote something to that effect in Mr. Osborne's paper, *The Horse-breeder*, at the time little thinking that we should ever have to discuss his merits as an English stud sire. Thanking Mrs. Osborne for her kind hospitality, we bade the genial old veteran good-bye.

'MR. JOHN.'

By FINCH MASON.



VERYBODY called him 'Mr. John,' and everybody liked and pitied him—liked him on account of his simple-minded, lovable nature; pitied him, because having run through his patrimony early in life, he was forced to reside with his rich bachelor brother, the Squire of Enderby Chase, who was far from being popular in the county, and who, on the strength of his hospitality, never neglected the opportunity of reminding his impoverished relative of his dependent position, treating him more like a servant than anything else; if anything not so well, indeed, for it is tolerably certain that not one of them would have stood without resentment the petty slights and coarse insults to which their ill-conditioned master treated Mr. John pretty nearly every day of his life.

Next to his huntsman, who is if anything the greater man of the two, there is no more important personage in a county than the M. F. H. Not only is it a post which requires no inconsiderable amount of tact and diplomacy, but it is almost essential that besides a capacity for 'showing sport,' the holder of the proud title should possess social qualities in an equal degree, if he is to be a success.

Richard Enderby, of Enderby Chase, owner of a fine estate and Master of the hounds—hereditary Master one might almost say, seeing that they had been handed down from father to son for many generations past—might have been the most popular man in the county had he so chosen. Unfortunately he did not so choose. A keen sportsman—he lived for nothing else—the sport he showed with his hounds left nothing to be desired, as everybody agreed; but when you said that you had said everything. In short, a more morose and ill-conditioned personage than Richard Enderby it would have been hard to find had you searched the whole of England through and through; and poor, impecunious Mr. John might well be pitied by the community for being obliged to make his home in the castle of such an ogre as his elder brother.

John Enderby was the very opposite to the Squire in every particular, even in appearance—a stranger, indeed, would never have taken the two for brothers. Fair-haired was Mr. John, with kindly blue eyes which looked one straight and fearlessly in the face, with a ruddy complexion, and possessing a well-knit, stalwart figure which his numerous admirers amongst the fair sex declared never showed to more advantage than when attired in the scarlet coat and black velvet collar of the Enderby Hunt. The Squire, on the contrary, though well built enough, was as dark as the other was fair, with features of a harsh, almost forbidding appearance. Whilst as for his temper—well, the less said about it the better. His enemies, and they were numerous, vowed he had never said a kind word or done a good action in his life, and how Mr. John stood his mean treatment and petty insults all day long they couldn't imagine. He must be the best-natured man in existence, they deemed. And so he was.

'There are some hounds due to arrive at Yelverton Station this afternoon by the 3.30 train,' he would say, addressing Mr. John; 'just go down and fetch them, will you?'

'All right, Dick' (nobody but Mr. John ever called the

Squire 'Dick') would the other reply. 'Shall I take the dog-cart?'

'No, walk over; it will do you good, and take some of that superabundant fat of yours down,' would be the surly reply.

And then Mr. John would walk off to do his bidding without a murmur. Or, it would be, 'I want you to go up to town to-morrow and bid for two of those horses of So-and-so's at Tattersall's. Third-class, mind, and come straight back by the next train, d'ye hear?'

Poor Mr. John! he was too old to go for a soldier, otherwise, if it had not been for his passion for foxhunting, and the knowledge that he couldn't indulge in his favourite amusement without the aid of his brother, who fed, clothed, and mounted him, he would have 'listed' long ago, he often thought to himself. So he grinned and bore it all in silence, eking out as best he could the magnificent sum of fifty pounds a year his brother allowed him for pocket money, ten of which he always reserved to try and back the winner of the Derby. 'It was all my own fault,' he would argue philosophically, whenever any of his cronies, as was not seldom the case, pronounced their opinion that the Squire of Enderby was a stingy brute; 'and you really mustn't speak like that of Dick, don't you know, for after all, he's very good to me on the whole, allowing me to live on here and so on. He's a funny chap, too, not like other people, and I dare say he doesn't mean half he says.' And poor old Mr. John would generally wind up on these occasions: 'And I really believe he's very fond of me at heart, though he doesn't perhaps *show* it, don'tcherknow.' And his friends, holding quite contrary opinions, would go away with pity in their hearts, and breathing sentiments not at all conducive to the welfare or longevity of the elder Enderby.

It was fifteen years since Mr. John's fortune had gone out with the tide. He having, like a good many of his fellow-men before him, embarked the whole of it on the turf, with the inevitable result. For fifteen years had he hung on at Enderby Chase, a miserable man at heart, though you would not have thought it to look at him. And now people said Mr. John had taken to drink, and that his brother, the Squire, encouraged him; a remark the latter made one day out hunting giving an air of truth to the report. Several sportsmen, including the Master, collected together in a ride, were discussing their various weights.

'I wonder,' remarked Mr. John, turning to his brother, 'I



Rich Huns

"Rode full tilt at the Brooks"

-4-

wonder what I shall pull down the beam at when I am your age' (the Squire be it remarked was his brother's senior by ten or twelve years).

'*You*,' sneered the other, with a look of ineffable scorn on his face, '*you*, why you'll never live to be my age.'

Of course there was a reason, apart from Mr. John's impetuosity, for his brother's undisguised detestation of him, and what is more every one in the county had guessed it long ago—quite correctly too for a wonder—though the principal people concerned had no idea of it. Yes, it was the old, old story that had been told so many a time and oft. A woman was at the bottom of it, and the Green-eyed Monster had stepped in. When the Squire rode up to Belton Towers on that June day just sixteen years ago, and never doubting for a moment the result, laid his heart and his fortune at the disposal of fair Julia Nesbit, the acknowledged belle of the county and an heiress to boot, and was politely but firmly refused, he could hardly believe his senses. When he found out that there was a rival in the field, and that rival his own brother, he was nearly beside himself with rage. There was the usual scene when the pair met, when the Squire behaved more like a raging maniac than anything else, whilst Mr. John was the gentleman he always was, never losing his temper for a second. When his infuriated brother had had his say, he spoke thus:

'You are quite right, Dick,' he said; '*I am* in love with Julia—worship the very ground she walks upon, indeed; but for all that had I known your intentions I would have given her up freely, hard though it would have been. However,' he added, 'there is no harm done, we have both kept our feelings to ourselves, and as yet I have said *nothing*. More than that, I *shall* say nothing' (his voice was very husky now). 'Dick, I've had a bad week at Ascot—the worst I ever had. I went for the gloves, and—and it didn't come off. When Monday comes I shan't have a thousand pounds in the world to call my own. I am ruined in short, lock, stock, and barrel. Had it been the other way about I intended saying good-bye to the turf for ever and a day, and to have asked Julia to marry me. Of course now it will have to be all over between us. Poor Julia! There, you've heard all about it, now, Dick, and my advice is, see Julia again. Tell her all I have told you, if you choose, though I would rather you didn't, of course. Anyhow, you have my best wishes, and I can't say more, can I?'

Poor Mr. John! Of course he couldn't, and the Squire was not only aware of the fact, but hated his brother more cordially than ever, for he knew quite well that he had no more chance with his rival out of the way than he had before. He determined to have a try though, for all that, and he did, repeating to Miss Nesbit almost word for word what his rival had said.

'That is quite enough, Mr. Enderby,' she said, when he had finished. 'I am very, very sorry to hear about your—your brother, and—I wish you a very good morning,' and courtesying to the Squire she swept from the room.

That was the true history of Richard Enderby's detestation of poor, thoughtless Mr. John. And now sixteen years have elapsed the situation is practically unchanged. Julia Nesbitt, still unmarried, though she has had scores of suitors, lives on at Belton Towers all by herself—for her father has been dead some time—amusing herself principally with hunting and fishing, but very unhappy, for her heart is still the property of Jack Enderby, though he does not know it. Never mind, trueheart, good is sure to come eventually to those who wait, and maybe you will be rewarded for your constancy sooner than you think.

* * * * *

It is a cold December morning, and Mr. Enderby's hounds are at Ditchley Common, their first appearance after the long spell of frost and snow with which the country has been iron-bound for the last fortnight. The snow, indeed, is hardly out of the ground yet in places, and the river and its tributaries are full to overflowing. Ben Stoddart the huntsman may well remark to Mr. John that if they find in Willoughby Gorse, as they are pretty certain to do, and the fox heads for the Vale, there will be a good many empty saddles in the course of the morning, and the *bruks*, as he called them, full of men as well as water.

'You needn't fear though, Mr. John,' he added; 'the one you're on is out-and-out the best water-jumper we've got in the stables. I only wish,' he continued, 'I could say the same for the chestnut horse the Squire's going to ride. He's a queer-tempered brute as ever I saw, both in and out of the stable, and you mark my words, if the Squire ain't a bit gentler than he usually is, and don't humour him a bit, there'll be a row.'

'That's a pity,' exclaimed John Enderby. 'I would have ridden him gladly if I had only known.'

'Well, to tell you the truth, Mr. John,' went on the hunts-

man, 'the stud groom *did* propose that you should, but the horse had come with such a character from Leicestershire that the Squire, I fancy, thought it was a plant of Joe's to put you upon the best 'un, and the consequence was that he fixed to ride him himself, and, as I said afore, I truly hope they'll agree together, but I have my doubts.'

At this point Richard Enderby galloped up on his hack, evidently in the worst of tempers.

'Where's my horse?' he shouted to his brother, as he pulled up his steaming hack. 'Not here? Then go and find him, confound you! You *might* do something for a living, surely! You would if you were an honest man; but then you are not, don't you know.'

Mr. John's face got crimson, as well it might; but he said nothing, as usual, and went off at once in search of the missing steed, with which he quickly returned. A fine-looking horse the chestnut proved to be, a hunter all over, and well-bred enough to win the Grand National, but such a shifty eye on him that boded mischief to his rider if not a workman.

The Squire lost no time in mounting, a feat which he had no sooner accomplished, than up went the chestnut on his hind legs. His rider, however, was equal to the occasion, and raising his heavy, iron-handled whip, brought it down with all the force he could command right between the brute's ears. So heavy a blow was it, that for the moment the horse seemed completely stunned, and walked soberly along as if he were the quietest animal in creation.

Once in the saddle, the Master lost no time in giving the order to move off, and accordingly away went the gay cavalcade to the famous Gorse—hounds, horses, and men, all eager for the fray after their enforced idleness. Hardly had the hounds dashed into covert before a whimper was heard, then another, the sound gradually swelling into a grand chorus by the whole strength of the company, so to speak. The next instant and out came a fine dog-fox in full view of the field, who, with a flourish of his white-tagged brush, as much as to say, 'I'll beat the lot of you yet!' set his head straight for the Vale, and went away best pace.

Quick as lightning the hounds were after him, and with a burning scent it looked uncommonly like being *the* run of the season. So fast was the pace that the 'Flyers of the Hunt' had less difficulty than usual in singling themselves out from the

mob, and before they had traversed a mile there were only about seven or eight riders anywhere near the flying pack.

These included Julia Nesbit, taking everything that came in her way as usual, the Master, and Mr. John, the latter so far having slightly the best of it.

The chestnut horse was evidently a handful—a magnificent jumper, but rushed his fences in the most impetuous fashion, and defied all the efforts of his rider to pull him together. The Squire, quiet and good horseman as he was, felt quite exhausted. And now the disappearance of the hounds from sight for a second, followed by the sound of splashing water, warned them that the celebrated Hursley brook was at hand. It wanted a lot of doing at the best of times, and to-day was doubly awkward, owing to the water having overflowed the banks.

The huntsmen diverged to the left to a friendly ford, and Mr. John, who seldom turned away from anything, was about to follow suit when a voice from behind arrested him. It was his brother, Richard.

'What, *you* funking?' he shouted, 'Come, sir, give me a lead at once, or you shall never ride a horse of mine again.'

They were the last words the Squire ever spoke in this world.

His brother, with his usual submissiveness, set his horse going once more, and rode full tilt at the brook, neither knowing nor caring where the banks began or ended. The result was that, jumping short, the horse, catching the opposite bank with his knees with tremendous force, turned a complete summersault into the field beyond, breaking his own neck and crushing his rider beneath him in the fall. Worse was to come.

The Squire was just behind, and, now thoroughly exhausted, tried in vain to steady the chesnut, who, with head in the air, tore wildly at the brook. Jumping short, he lit with fore-feet only on the edge of the opposite bank, which, giving way, caused both horse and rider to fall backwards into the water.

The beast quickly righted himself, and, scrambling out, galloped off riderless after the hounds. Not so the Squire, of whom nothing was to be seen.

A whipper-in, galloping up, quickly solved the question by alighting from his horse and plunging into the muddy water in search of his master. In another second he had him by the collar and, with assistance from the bank, dragged him to dry land.

'Quite dead!' said a doctor, who was present and who had been busying himself with poor Mr. John, as he examined the inanimate body. 'Quite dead, and his brother, I fear, not much better.'

It was, indeed, a tragic termination to what would have been otherwise a red-letter day in the annals of the Hunt.

The Squire, there was no question about it, was as dead as Julius Cæsar; but how about 'poor Mr. John?' Did he succumb to his fall, as the doctor prognosticated, or did he eventually pull round?

The best answer to that question is, that not six months after the accident was to be read in the *Morning Post* the announcement of the marriage of John Enderby, of Enderby Chase, to Julia, only daughter of the late Colonel Nesbit, of Belton Towers.

More than that, the meets of the pack known as 'Mr. Enderby's Hounds' still figure every week amongst the hunting appointments in the *Field* newspaper.

As for the chestnut horse, who was mainly responsible for the death of the Squire, John Enderby had him shot. He not only hated the sight of him, he averred, but declared that the brute shouldn't be the death of any one else.

His friends, on the contrary, declared that Mr. John was, in this case, decidedly ungrateful, and by rights ought to have turned the unlucky hunter out to grass for the rest of his life.

EGERTON LODGE.

(THE QUEEN OF THE 'BOXES.')

By 'MELTONIAN.'



HERE a sweep of the Eye laves the greenerie fair,
And St. Mary's her coronal rears in the air,
Flinging forth to the breeze her melodious chimes,
Stands a mansion that breathes of the 'spacious old times,'
When the haughty Armada came over the wave,
When Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, Effingham brave,
With the wild Westland boys made their 'three-deckers' shake;
And the hearts of Iberia's heroes to quake,
While old Neptune, admiring that glorious band,
Strewed the remnant on wild Caledonia's strand:

'Twas from Plymouth they laid on the sea-dogs of old,
Who declined Philip's thumb-screws, but went for his gold.
Now round Melton we can't find a Spaniard to chase,
So with hunting old Charley our sinews we brace.
'Mid a picturesque park, strewn with clumps of white-thorn,
On the northernmost limits of jovial Quorn
Stands the home where Lord Wilton the season would spend,
That begins with 'The Gate,' and with Croxton doth end.
He was 'whip' to the Quorn—not the galloping wight
Who in cheesecutter cap and in scarlet bedight
Bids the skirter 'get forrard,' chastises the hound,
That in covert too long privateering is found,
But the genial host who his portals threw wide
To the riders who mustered at each covert-side,
From old Gartree's round hill to the southernmost bounds,
Where the fast lady pack oft invades the grass 'grounds,'
And the groves of Northampton in melody ring
With the music of Quorn in the land of Charles King ;
Hunting boxes abound around Melton we know,
But this old 'Claret Lodge' kept subscribers in tow
When dissension grew rife and the day seemed at hand
That should banish the beauties of Quorn from the land ;
Then the wit and the beauty at Egerton's board,
His table well garnished, his cellars well stored,
Made the malcontent sportsmen their troubles forget,
Kept the Quornites afieid ; they are flying there yet ;
And Meltonians still think with pride of the day
When the earl in the halls of this mansion held sway,
Though his heir was a nobleman true to the core,
And no worthier Wilton the coronet wore,
Yet his reign was too short : through the famed hunting shire
Song and story still ring with the name of his sire,
Whom they nick-named 'The Quilter,' but you may go bail
When they did it Lord Wilton was not within hail,
For they knew through broad England there wasn't a peer,
Not a Fitzalan, Howard, or haughty De Vere
Would feel more indignation whenever the mass
Showed a penchant for speaking of men of his class
In irreverent style ; still the story is told,
I have heard it myself from his servitor old,
Who offended his lordship by daring to say
'Many happy returns' on the morn of the day,
That with each rolling year did the record renew
In the life of the last of the line of FitzHugh.
The old Quilter was shaving first thing in the morn,
And debating which gee-gee he'd ride with the Quorn ;

Now it isn't a matter like shelling of peas,
With a razor performing to look at your ease,
Let alone putting on that particular frown
That through centuries nine had been handed him down,
But his brow the old horseshoe undoubtedly wore,
And Jem shuffled away out of sight when he swore
He would rather be scolded or horsewhipped outright
Than he'd stand in the shoes of the rash-minded wight
Who should venture next year to my lord to recall,
Or suggest that he ever was brought forth at all.
Well, he'd this little failing, and some people say
That the earl 'mong the ladies was sprightly and gay,
But we all have our foibles, and take him all round,
'As a judge of a horse, or the points of a hound,'
As a rider or host for the squadrons of Quorn,
There was never a man to a coronet born
Since the hunt came to Melton could sit in the place
Of the last earl but two of the old Cheshire race,
That from Malpas the knight of the ponderous brand
Took its rise and from father to son made a stand,
Though the defiles bore hard on their brave Norman spears
'Gainst the chieftains of Wales and their wild mountaineers,
For the earl was the last of the sons of the chase
Whom Whyte Melville delighted to draw ; 'tis the race
The great Thackeray limns in the Esmonds of old,
In his charity gracious, in trespasses bold,
He would cast forth his hawk where he chanced on his game,
Or go 'out' with a Dixon, 'twas ever the same.
I believe that a thorn-tree in Egerton park,
If you carefully search will reveal in its bark
An old scar from the colonel's erroneous ball
That was meant for the master of Egerton hall.
Still the grey mullioned windows look over the stream,
But the brave days at Egerton Lodge are a dream
Of the past, for the reaper came twice to the hall
Scarce the hatchment was moved from the ivy-clad wall
That proclaimed the long race of Lord Wilton was run,
When they reared it again for the death of his son ;
So the 'Queen of the Boxes' went under a cloud,
But we'll hope for the day when an Egerton, proud
Of the Quilter's career, and with 'sinews' galore,
Shall hold revel in Egerton's bowers once more.

A WHEEZE FROM THE CAB-RANK.

By GEORGE F. UNDERHILL.

I AM only a poor cab-horse. What I shall be to-morrow I do not know, for I am in the direst disgrace in which I have ever been in my short life; and my life has been nothing but a series of disgraces from the day that I was foaled to the present time. Yet I consider the cause of my last disgrace to be my most creditable performance. The scoundrel who prevented my enjoying an honourable career on the Turf and a lazy existence at the Stud afterwards got into my cab in Pall Mall. My old hot blood rushed to my head. I lashed out at the dashboard till I had kicked myself out of the harness. I wish I had kicked him out of the world as well.

I must have been a very precocious colt, for I fell in love when only six months old with the daughter of my owner. How well I remember those days of my childhood in the paddock! I thought, and still think, her to be the sweetest woman who ever wore a habit. She would at first coax me with sugar to come to her, and then bury her beautiful head on my shoulder, and soon we became fast friends and constant companions. But I never thought that she was quite happy. I was an observant little colt, and speedily discovered the cause of her unhappiness.

I belonged to Squire Pelham, and Miss Nell, as we always called her, was his only daughter. I learned later, though I was too young to know it then, that she was an heiress, and considered a big prize in the matrimonial market. The Squire wanted her to marry one man and she wanted to marry another. I felt that she wanted to confide her troubles in me, and I determined to help her in my own vicious fashion, for they say that I have always been vicious since my birth.

It was in a large paddock that my first escapade took place, a paddock which had been my home since I remembered anything, the paddock in which I had enjoyed my earliest gambols, and where Miss Nell had first caressed me. Here the Squire brought the Honourable Philip Auriol (the man Miss Nell disliked) to look at me, for he was very proud of showing his



"I lashed out at him
and heard a cry of horror."

young stock to his friends. Miss Nell was with them, and came up to me in her usual winsome manner. Auriol, who looked like a big, coarse-faced bully, began to talk to her with contemptible familiarity as he patted me, at which she was obviously displeased. Here was my opportunity. Springing round, I lashed out at him, and heard a cry of horror as I bounded off, and when I stopped I saw the man I hated lying senseless upon the ground.

The first thing that happened was that I received a severe lecture from Queen of the May, an old brood mare, who used to give us all advice. She told me that if I did not curb my vicious temper I should come to harm, and sent me away feeling a very depressed little colt indeed. I felt more depressed afterwards when Jim, one of the stable lads, had caught me and was leading me out of the paddock.

‘Poor little Apollo,’ he said, patting me (I had been christened Apollo), ‘it’s a shame to shoot you. That ’ere Auriol ain’t much good either, I reckon ; but the Squire’s in an awful rage.’

I was put into a loose box, where I remained till the morning. Oh! the agony which I suffered during that night. I who had listened to the stories of Queen of the May, and had determined to do credit to my famous pedigree, was to be shot, when only a little thing of six months old! At one time I wondered whether Miss Nell would pity me, at another I kicked in frantic rage. This latter proceeding woke up an old cob in the next box, who was at first very surly ; but when I had told him my story, he comforted me by saying I was too valuable to be shot.

It may have been my value, but I prefer to think that it was the pleading of Miss Nell which saved my life. Jim was putting my head collar on about eleven o’clock on the following morning, when she came into my box with the usual sugar. I could see her eyes were dim with tears, but she kissed me again and again. I could have kicked a hundred men to death for her sake. As Jim led me down the stable-yard I plunged and tried to break away to go back to her, and it was not until she entered the stable so that I could not see her that I became quiet again. Then I walked away in despondency.

It must have been this despondency which prevented my being frightened at my first journey by train. I noticed nothing, and did not care what might happen to me. I only remember that when I arrived at my new quarters somebody, whom I

afterwards discovered to be the stud groom, said I was sulky. He afterwards discovered that, whatever might be my faults, sulkiness was not one of them.

For several days—it may have been weeks—I continued to be wretched. Yet I had no fault to find with my new quarters. If anything they were more luxurious than Squire Pelham's paddock. But I had not the friends of my babyhood. I had not Queen of the May to give me advice. I was only a strange little colt amongst strangers, and I longed for Miss Nell and her caresses.

But I soon found other things to occupy my thoughts. It being time that I went to school, I was mouthed, lunged, and backed in the usual way. During the lunging process I behaved fairly well; it was only when I felt the whip that I broke out. It is hard on a little colt when he is trying to do his best to feel the whipcord on his flanks. Still, on the whole, they were kind, and I knew that the stud groom was proud of me. As to what is generally considered one of the most important events in a horse's life—namely, being backed—I had had so much experience with a dumb jockey made of indiarubber, that the feeling of having something really alive on my back was a source both of pride and pleasure. I knew that my schooling was nearly over, and that I was about to begin the real business of life.

All this time I had no idea who my owner was. Nobody had ever been to inspect me whom I could imagine to be my real master. The place might have belonged to the stud groom so far as appearances went. There was a big house close to the stables, but nobody seemed to live there. Not that this troubled me much, for I had other things to think about. I had plenty of exercise, always took kindly to my corn, and was fast filling out. Old Tom, the lad who attended to me, though he was really a wizen-faced old man of sixty, took great pride in my appearance, grooming me down till my chesnut coat shone like satin. I liked old Tom, and we used to have many a game of play together, but I resented anybody else entering my box, and would put my ears back and rush at them. This was one of my habits which gained me the reputation for being vicious.

I had another habit, too, which enhanced my character for vice. I could never bear the touch of either whip or spur. I considered it an insult to my dignity, and would immediately try to buck my rider off. On several occasions I succeeded in doing so, and would then enjoy a gallop on my own account.

One day was so exactly like another that it is impossible for me to say how long this period of my life extended. At last an event happened to vary the monotony.

It was in the autumn—as far as I can judge, about the middle of October—that I noticed that Tom took more than his usual trouble in grooming me after morning exercise, and one day I turned my head round inquiringly as he kept saying, ‘Whoa, Apollo, my beauty! We’ll let ’em know to-day all about yer, yer scamp! We’ll knock beans out of the rest of ’em, if his lordship ain’t off ’is onion!’ This led me to conclude that there was something on the cards, and I waited impatiently to learn what it was.

About eleven o’clock I was saddled and ridden to the exercising ground in company with seven more of us youngsters. The stud groom, who had exchanged his ordinary autocratic manners for an air of servility, was talking to a group of five or six ladies and gentlemen, one of whom I immediately guessed to be my owner. In walking past I gave an inquisitive glance at the group. What was my surprise and delight to see standing there Miss Nell! I whinnied, and would have bounded up to her if I had been able. As it was I only succeeded in nearly unseating my rider.

At a sign from Lord Rugby—for that I afterwards discovered was the name of my owner—I was brought up to him, and heard the stud groom say, ‘Take care, my lady, he’s a very vicious colt;’ but Miss Nell paid no heed to him, and came forward and patted and coaxed me in the same old way which I knew so well. Lord Rugby smiled, and I then remembered that I had seen him before at Squire Pelham’s. It was evident, even to my little mind, that he had cut out Auriol, and made Miss Nell his own, which determined me, for her sake, to do all I could for him.

The next day I took my second journey by rail, together with three other yearlings, under the superintendence of the stud groom. We went to a place where there seemed to be nothing but turf as far as the eye could see. I was intoxicated with the breezy air, and bounded about in a manner which was very distressing to the lad who was leading me.

My new quarters were more luxurious than either of my previous ones, but I soon found out that my work was much harder. Not that I disliked the early exercise on the Downs, with the morning air rushing up my nostrils. It was the being

covered up with clothing and being obliged to walk that I detested. I was always longing to be stripped and to have a glorious gallop on my own account.

But I had only to wait till the spring, when I had quite as many gallops as I wanted. Other horses often raced with me. I have run in many big races since, but never enjoyed any of my victories as much as these my first trials. Three or four times Lord Rugby came down to watch them, and once he brought Miss Nell with him. I can never call her anything but Miss Nell, though I knew then that she was Lady Rugby.

It was after her visit that I noticed that they took more care than ever about me. My trainer was present at all my gallops. Even my food was carefully examined before it was given to me. When I went out to exercise all the lads looked admiringly. I was to represent the stable in the Two Thousand Guineas.

* * * * *

As I stepped on to the course for the preliminary canter I had never felt so proud in my life. In the paddock I had been the cynosure of all eyes, from those of royalty downwards, though I had made such free use of my heels that my admirers had given me a wide berth. The reason of my kicking was that I had caught sight of the sullen face of my old enemy Auriol. But the presence of Miss Nell soon put me in a better temper, and I was quiet enough when I came under the orders of the starter, though every limb was quivering with excitement. I jumped forward at the start, and it was not until we had gone over a quarter of a mile that my jockey was able to steady me at all. My only thought was to keep ahead of my rivals, and I was angry at being held back. Then I felt the reins slacken and my jockey's legs press closer to me. In a dozen strides I was again ahead. I could hear the whips going behind, though I was never touched. I heard the shout, 'Apollo wins!' then I was pulled up the winner of the Two Thousand Guineas.

Such was my first sweet taste of victory. I am afraid it made me very conceited. I looked down with contempt on my stable companions, and used to show off at exercise by plunging and rearing in the most unruly fashion. More care was taken of me than ever. A man always slept in a small room adjoining my box. I had a presentiment that something important was going to happen.

Of course, the something important was the Derby. I felt a

little frightened at first at the huge crowd of people. Then the thought of being beaten before such a multitude made me more determined than ever to do my best to win. The same jockey was riding me as had ridden me in the Two Thousand. (He had also ridden me in my trials.) We understood each other, for, though one or two lads had ridden me much oftener, I never felt so inclined to race as when this man was on my back. He seemed to have such power in his legs that he helped me in every stride. On this occasion he veritably lifted me in front of my rivals at the finish, but I only won by a head.

This took some of the conceit out of me. I was not the champion that I had thought I was—in fact, if it had not been for my jockey I should have been beaten. For some days afterwards I felt most terribly tired.

I had a long rest now, what work I did being of the easiest description. More than once Lord Rugby and Miss Nell came down to see me, and Lord Rugby used to look very anxious. Although I had won two of the big races of the year, my companions had been most unfortunate. I longed to have my favourite jockey on my back again, and to hear the hurrahs of the crowd as I beat all rivals.

The time soon came when my ambition was to be gratified. My work was much harder. I was given long gallops, and one morning had a trial with my favourite jockey in the saddle. I won it, but not as easily as I could have wished. Both Lord Rugby and Miss Nell were there, but the former looked very careworn. There was another person there, whom I did not notice till they came up to me after the trial; this person was Philip Auriol. I was too tired to show my resentment, though I felt it all the same.

As before the Derby, so now a man slept in the room adjoining my box. He was not the lad who looked after me; beyond that I don't know who he was. One night he opened the door and cautiously peeped in at me. Now, I could never endure any stranger coming near me in the stable, and I was going to resent his presence, when, with a 'Whoa, old hoss!' he handed me a piece of sugar. The action reminded me of Miss Nell. I ate the sugar and asked for more. Altogether I must have eaten four or five lumps. If I had only known what I was eating, I would have bitten off my own tongue and swallowed it before I touched the poisonous stuff.

The next morning I was taken down to Doncaster. I shall

never forget the agony I suffered during the journey. When I was detrained my limbs were so stiff that I could hardly walk out of the box. There was no doubt about it. I, the winner of the Derby and the favourite for the St. Leger, had been nobbled.

I have only a dim recollection of what happened afterwards. Lord Rugby came to see me, with two veterinary surgeons. Miss Nell was there also, with tears in her eyes. The sequel is soon told. I was scratched, and Lord Rugby's losses were so great that he was compelled to sell his racing stud and retire from the Turf.

I was sold at Newmarket during the Cesarewitch week. I do not know what price was paid for me, but only that I became the property of Philip Auriol. Before I was led away Miss Nell came to say good-bye to me. She gave me a lump of sugar. I wish it had been deadly poison.

When I was taken to my new quarters I was surprised to find that the lad who had charge of me was none other than the man who had slept in the room next to my old box, and who had nobbled me. I soon learnt that this scamp had been in the pay of Philip Auriol, and that Philip Auriol was Lord Rugby's largest creditor. But before I discovered this I nearly killed him. It was the second time he had come into my box. I rushed at him, and catching his arm crunched it between my teeth. He never came within reach of my heels again.

Until the following spring there were only two circumstances in my life worth recording. The first was that I missed Miss Nell's visits, which made me very low spirited, especially as I knew that my present owner had robbed her husband. The second was that my temper grew worse and worse every day. At times there were even grave doubts as to whether they would be able to train me; but Auriol was determined to get his money back, and would have sacrificed the life of every lad in the stable to effect his purpose. The result was that I was brought out for the Lincoln Handicap, in which race I delayed the start for twenty minutes, and was not even placed. In short, though I ran several times during the season, I only won one race at Ascot. However, I won the reputation of being the worst-tempered horse in training.

As a matter of fact, I had never recovered from the sugar incident before the previous year's St. Leger. What had been courage was now vice.



I longed for Miss Nell
and her Carriages

Bea

I had only once seen Miss Nell and Lord Rugby—namely at Ascot; but I gathered from the remarks of the men about the stable that there had been a quarrel between Lord Rugby and Auriol. Ostensibly the cause of the quarrel was connected with racing, but I have a suspicion that Miss Nell had something to do with it.

I was a very miserable horse at the end of this my second season. Although having only won once, I had been worked hard, and had to confess to myself that I had broken down. I had pulled up lame after my last race, and had not got sound again. I knew that my racing career was over, and wondered what would happen next.

During the next six months I changed hands no less than seven times. If it had not been for the devilment which made me delight in doing mischief, I believe my heart must have broken. I, who had been accustomed to a luxurious box, now found myself in the dirty stall of a dealer. I was too down-spirited even to kick as my new owner stood looking at me biting a straw. He had bought me cheap, and evidently did not know what to do with me now that I was his property. He made up his mind to one thing, however—namely, to treat me with kindness: and I showed my gratitude by never losing my temper with him. Still I had my work to do. Every day he used to school me over some fences at the back of the stables. He was very patient, and I took kindly to jumping. The consequence was that in the early autumn I was sold as a hunter.

My new owner was one of those men who hunt to jump. As a rider he was absolutely reckless, and did not think he had had a good day's sport unless he had come at least one nasty cropper. The result was that before Christmas I was hopelessly lame, and was sent up to Aldridge's to be sold without reserve. There my present owner bought me, and since then I, the winner of 'the blue ribbon of the Turf,' have been a slave in a hansom cab.

And what is to become of me now? I hear that I am to be sold again by public auction. Will they put me up for sale under my old once famous name? It is my only hope. Perhaps Miss Nell might then hear of me, and save me from further degradation. If I only once had the delight of conveying her I should die happy.

SENSATIONAL CRICKET IN 1895.

By SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.

THERE are very few people, save bowlers, who will deny that up to the end of June, the past cricket season was just what a cricket season ought to be. Glorious weather, hard true wickets, and the giants of the game in their best form. No wonder centuries came thick and fast, and leather hunting was the order of the day. But with July came an alteration in the weather, rain fell abundantly, and for the remainder of the season the bowlers got the upper hand, and batsmen's averages came down consistently, so after all both branches of the game had their turn, and no one should therefore grumble. June was the month most productive of centuries; in its first week I noted 42, in its second 44, and in its last 43. From this time they fell off, and though one fairly fine week in July produced 34, they dwindled away, until one week in August could only produce 4. Of course, I am now only speaking of the better class of cricket. Of innings of over 300, I counted 172; over 400, 42; 500, 8; 600, 3; 700, 1; 800, 1; of these tremendous scores I shall have more to say.

Glancing back over the past season, I think it will be remembered chiefly for three things—the wonderful doings of Grace; the record score of MacLaren, and the bowling of young Townsend; while chroniclers of the game will have to set down the inclusion of five fresh counties in the first-class list, and for this reason it is impossible to draw comparisons as regards County Cricket between the past season and those that have gone before. Taking a hasty glance at this feature of the game (perhaps the most trustworthy criterion of what the cricket has been), we see that 78 centuries have been recorded, 11 batsmen made over 1000 runs, 131 matches have been played, 90,513 runs scored, and 4321 wickets have been taken. Notts raised the record score in county cricket to 726, and then Lancashire wrested the honours from them by carrying it to 801, A. C. MacLaren making 424, and having the highest average, 58 and a fraction; Abel coming next with 51·2, and Grace a good third with 50·24. C. L. Townsend carries off the bowling average of 12·73 for 124 wickets, but it must be remembered

that he did not bowl nearly as much as some of the others, and that his work was done towards the end of the season, when rain was helping the bowlers. Still for a young player, not yet 20, to take 100 wickets in 10 matches is an extraordinary performance, and materially aided his county, Gloucester, to jump from last to 4th on the list.

And now let us take a wider view of cricket generally, and we shall be rewarded by many sensational items. To commence with Grace; for, after all, it has been *his* year (putting aside some well-deserved monetary rewards). On 16th, 17th, and 18th May, in Gloucestershire *v.* Somersetshire, he made his hundredth century in first-class cricket, scoring 288; it was a big scoring match, for Gloucester made 474 and 19 for 1 wicket, while Somerset ran up 303 and 189. Board for Gloucester in the two innings caught 7, and stumped another. On 23rd, 24th, and 25th May, in Gloucester *v.* Kent, Grace made 257 and 73 not out, and at the conclusion of the month he had played 10 innings for 1016 runs, giving an average of 112·8. It was not till 20th July, in the second innings of Gloucester *v.* Lancashire, that he made his first single figure score this season, 5. This being his year, I will say nothing about his first 0.

The big scores commenced early; on 16th, 17th, and 18th May Surrey scored 520 (Lockwood 158, and all but Brockwell getting double figures) against the 123 and 174 of Warwickshire; and on the same dates Notts made 726 (Gunn 219, R. H. Howitt 119, Bagguley 110) against the 170 and 178 of Sussex, thus claiming the record in county cricket, which until then Surrey had held with 698, made against Sussex in 1888. In first-class cricket it had only once been beaten, in 1893, when the Australians made 843 against Past and Present of Oxford and Cambridge. In Australia, however, 803 was made by Non-smokers *v.* Smokers in 1887, and 775 by New South Wales against Victoria in 1882. As I have said, Notts only held this record a very short time, for on 15th, 16th, and 17th July, Lancashire made 801 against the 143 and 206 of Somersetshire. It was in this match that the old Harrow boy, A. C. MacLaren, made 424, the record score in a first-class match, beating by 80 the 344 made by W. G. Grace in 1876, for M.C.C. *v.* Kent. It is also the highest score in all cricket, excepting the 485 made by A. E. Stoddart in 1886, for Hampstead. The first day MacLaren made 289, which was the biggest total of the present season, and on the second day he increased this to 424. He

was at the wicket 7 hours and 50 minutes, and only made two hits which could be called chances, the first when he had totalled 262. Another big scoring match was *Sussex v. Somerset* on 6th, 7th, and 8th June—*Sussex* 518 (Marlow 155) and 243 for 9 wickets; *Somerset* 465 (Woods 215) and 118 for 3 wickets. *Sussex* came off again later, on 24th, 25th, and 26th of same month, when they made 487 (G. L. Wilson 174, Marlow 130) and 278 (Ranjitsinhji 137 not out) for 8 wickets, against *Oxford's* 651 (C. B. Fry 125, G. J. Mordaunt 264, not out). This was a record aggregate of 1410 runs, the previous best having been 1402 in *Sussex v. Cambridge 'Varsity*, in 1891. On 11th, 12th, and 13th July, *Sussex* scored 692 (Carpenter 153, M'Gahey 147, A. P. Lucas 135, Russell 99) against *Somerset's* 246 and 129. In the *Hillside v. Whitclift* match on 5th June, the former made 506 for 5 wickets (H. B. Hayman 143, H. R. Herbert 106, H. Wyld 100, not out) against the latter's 73; and on 29th June, the *Staff Col.* made 401 for 3 wickets (Capt. Walker 138, Capt. Chichester 123) against the 131 of Capt. Cooper Key's team. On 5th August, *Granville (Lee)* made 436 for 2 wickets (W. Morris 235, not out, and C. Godfrey 100, not out) against the *Stoics' 87*. As well as big scoring, there has been quick scoring this season, as witness the *Oxford v. Somerset* match on 20th, 21st, and 22nd May, when Woods and L. Palairt made 50 in 14 minutes; this match was a close one, for *Oxford* only won by 1 wicket, and in the *Crediton and Wonford House (Exeter)* match on 8th June, the former made 212 in 2¼ hours; but this was beaten in the *Leinster and Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club* match at Dublin, on 17th July, when the latter got out for 60, and the former in 3 hours knocking up 413 for 4 wickets; Mr. Lambert, in 2 hours and 5 minutes, making 248 not out; this included 7 sixes, 1 five, 36 fours, 4 threes, 13 twos, and 19 ones. He scored his first century in 40 minutes. On 22nd, 23rd, 24th August, in *Gloucester v. Yorks*, for former G. L. Jessop, who is quite a youngster, made 63 out of 65 in 30 minutes, in 20 hits: 12 fours, 2 threes, 3 twos, and 3 singles.

There were some small scores, too. On 18th, and 19th July, *Notts* only made 109 and 40 against *Middlesex's* 243, and on 18th and 19th June they only made 35 and 122 against the 345 of *Lancashire*. In this match, *Mold* took 8 wickets for 20; in 3 overs, 5 wickets no runs, 4 in 4 balls. On 27th July, in *Pembroke v. Dundrum*, the former made 4

(Gallagher 1, byes 3) and 34; Dundrum 85. On 22nd June, Uplyme played St. Michael's College, Lyme Regis, and scored 14; out of the eleven only one man scored, and he made 10, there were 4 byes; their opponents made 78. On 11th May, Beccles College scored 100 for 8 wickets, and Gorleston 7 (5 runs, 2 byes).

There have been a good many close things during the past season. In the Oxford and Somerset match on 20th, 21st, and 22nd May, Oxford won by only 1 wicket; and on the same date Yorkshire beat Warwickshire with 6 minutes to spare. On 30th, and 31st May, and 1st June, there was a very close thing in the Somerset and Hampshire match, when the latter won by only 11, scoring 94 and 314 against the former's 221 and 176. The Eton and Harrow was a close thing in one sense. Eton scored 260 and 283 for 9 wickets, and Harrow 326 (Stogden 124) and 75 for 9 wickets, the last man was in, but contrived to keep his end up till time was called, though they played an extra half-hour. Lancashire beat Gloucestershire on 11th, 12th, and 13th July, by 12 runs. Somerset beat Yorks on 25th, 26th, and 27th August, by 29. In smaller matches, there was a curious tie in the Newark and Collingham match, on 1st August, each side scored 44; Newark went in the second time and scored the same number, and in Collingham's second attempt, they made 42 for 4 wickets, but their remaining batsmen only made 2 between them. The 36th and 62nd Regiments played a tie on 28th June, 169 each.

Now for some bowling. Playing for Essex *v.* Leicestershire, on 3rd, 4th, and 5th June, Pickett took the whole of his opponents' wickets in the first innings for 32 runs. In Surrey *v.* Somerset, on 22nd, 23rd, and 24th August, Tyler got all Surrey wickets in first innings, and in Somerset *v.* Yorks on 22nd July, Headley for former took 8 wickets for 18, after lunch sending down 9 overs 4 balls for 9 runs, 6 wickets; while for Yorks, Peel bowled his last 8 overs and 2 balls for 9 runs, 7 wickets. On the same date, for Gloucestershire *v.* Lancashire, Jessop took 5 wickets for 13. That 22nd July was quite a bowlers' day. In a match played on Whale Island, in June, between the Connaught Rangers and the Island, Cumberland for the latter took 10 wickets for 19, and on 28th August, for South Saxons *v.* Peripatetics, Henson took all 10 wickets for 39. On 15th June, in Headley *v.* No. 1 Army Service Corps, L. Rogers for former took 8 wickets for 30, of these 6 were captured for no

runs, 4 in one over; in second innings he got 9 for 6 runs. Mention has already been made several times of Jessop, and when playing for Beccles College *v.* St. Aubyn's School, Lowestoft, he was 'well on the spot,' performing the hat trick on three occasions; in the first innings he took 7 wickets for 3, and in the second innings 8 for 1, taking 6 wickets in 7 balls. When, on 13th July, he played for his College *v.* Norfolk County Asylum, he made 184 not out, and took 9 wickets.

I must not conclude my yarn this year without recalling to my readers a few of the many sensations which have happened. The season commenced for Surrey with a very unpleasant one, in the shape of a defeat at the hands of their old antagonists, Leicestershire, on 9th, 10th, and 11th May, the scores being—Surrey, 255 and 113; Leicestershire, 192 and 177 for 6 wickets. Leicester beat Surrey in 1894 by 34 runs, in 1893 by 5 wickets, in 1888 by 112, in 1886 by 10 wickets, and in 1883 by 7 runs. In the M.C.C. and Sussex match on the same dates, Sussex had to go in for the second time to make the enormous score of 405, and they only fell short of it by 20 runs—Ranjitsinhji making 150. In the Notts and Yorks match, 23rd, 24th, and 25th May, in former's first innings Wilkinson cut a ball through the slips, and ran 3, then it was claimed it had reached the boundary and counted 4; during the discussion, Wilkinson left his wicket to cross for the 4th run, when Peel put it down, and Lillywhite gave him out; but he was allowed to continue. For W. W. Read's benefit, on 27th, 28th, and 29th May, Surrey played Rest of England, and were beaten by an innings and 75 runs, this was the first time this match had been played since 1866, when they were beaten by an innings and 296 runs, Grace making 224 not out. W. W. Read has made over 40 centuries in first-class cricket, in 1888 scoring 338 against Oxford. Kent's first win this year was on 15th, 16th, and 17th July, when they made 468 against the 146 and 257 of Notts. There was not a ball bowled in the Lancashire and Somersetshire match, on 25th, 26th, and 27th July, owing to rain. On the last of these days, the Earl of Verulam died; he was the last survivor of the first Winchester and Harrow Elevens, and curiously enough it was on the seventieth anniversary of the first match. In the second innings of the Gloucester and Sussex match, on 5th, 6th, and 7th August, Gloucester had to go in to get 1 run. In the Somerset and Surrey match, on 10th, 11th, and 12th June, S. M. J. Woods and D. L. Evans made precisely

the same scores as in the same match last year, 85 and 26 respectively ; this year they put on 75 runs in 40 minutes ; last year, 74 runs in 50 minutes. On each occasion Evans was the first to go. Surrey won on both occasions by the same number of wickets. On 12th June, the record stand for a wicket was broken. The match was between 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers and Army Service Corps. The A. S. C. made 51. Commencing to bat at 10 minutes to 1, the Fusiliers scored 157 for 1 wicket at lunch time, after lunch, 247 were made in 1 hour 40 minutes, finally stumps were drawn with the score at 658, Capt. Oates 313 not out, Private Fitzgerald 287 not out ; as the first wicket fell at 35, the two had put on 623 runs, which beats by 18 the previous best of 605 made by Vernon and Trevor for Orleans Club *v.* Rickling Green. The I Zingari Jubilee Match *v.* Gentlemen of England, on 20th, 21st, and 22nd June, was productive of runs, I Zingari 289 and 293, Gentlemen 411 and 172 for no wickets (Grace 101 not out). In the Middlesex and Somerset match, on 4th, 5th, and 6th August, at the commencement of Somerset's second innings, L. Palairt and Fowler were in, Rawlin bowling. Palairt drove his first ball hard back, it hit Fowler and bounded on to Street, the umpire, and Rawlin failed to catch it as it fell from him, but dislocated the finger of his left hand in trying. On August 10th, Eleven Maws played Aldersgate at Holmesdale, Nutfield, and won by an innings and 95 runs.

A CENTURY'S STAGHUNTING IN HANTS.

By H. H.

TAKE England through, search the annals of sport from the earliest periods, and nowhere will we find that stag hunting, as pursued in the present day, has been more popular than in Hampshire. We are not alluding to the chase as it is now carried on within the confines of the New Forest, and as it was once followed in Woolmer Forest, Alice Holt and Waltham Chase, because *that*, like the Devon and Somerset stag hunting, is a different affair altogether, and may be almost regarded as a separate branch of sport, but to stag hunting from the cart, as conducted by the Royal Buckhounds, Lord Rothschild's, and the Surrey Stag hounds. It is true Surrey, since the time of the Lord Derby who lived at The

Oakes, and after whom the famous race was named, has run it hard in its enthusiasm for stag hunting, and, of course, Berks and Bucks, as the countries of the Royal pack, may claim to compete against it; but in those countries the record has been, as it were, continuous, and they have not had the difficulties to contend with that have faced the Hampshire people, who, in spite of changes of packs and masters, have always remained true to their deer-cart, and welcomed those who have come to hunt over their land. It is true the nature of the country lends itself more readily to the sport than is the case in most places, and it can be carried out with fewer drawbacks than are to be found elsewhere, and perhaps that is the cause of its popularity.

Very early in this century, as also late in the last, the Prince Regent was keeping hounds in Hants, and, if we are not much mistaken, stag hounds among others. Then came Mr. Shard, of Little Somborne House, who bought the original Devon and Somerset pack when it was given up by Mr. Lucas, of Baronsdown, and hunted deer in Hampshire with them, and the celebrated 'Nimrod' recorded some of his sport in his 'Hampshire Notes.' Grand as those great lemon-pied and hare-tan hounds were amidst the rocks, combes, and heather of their native wilds, where their melodious voices served as an unerring guide to their followers when the nature of the country prevented straight riding to them—and we know that one noted sportsman summed up the Western wilds as a country in which, when the hounds ran one way, you had to ride another to get to them—we should say they were not so well suited to the light uplands and chalk downs of Hampshire, where there is nothing to prevent your riding as straight to hounds as you like, unless they enter some dense woodland which deer, as a rule, decline to do. In fact, we have seen far more woodland hunting with deerhounds in Hertfordshire than in Hampshire, similar as the districts are in their nature, and we have had many a good run in each. The flints also, we fancy, must have inconvenienced such heavy hounds not a little, and it could not have been an arena on which their great beauties could have been displayed to the fullest extent. These were not long there, however, as a couple of seasons, from 1825 to 1826, saw them out, and when they were sold to go abroad the old staghound, with all his grand associations, ceased to exist in England. Next we come to Mr. Craven, of Bambridge, who for a year or two showed capital sport, and one great run in particular from

Farley Mount (the highest point in Hampshire, from which, it is said, both Chichester and Salisbury spires can be seen) to Anglesea, near Gosport, in the course of which the late Mr. Fitt, of Westley (who was riding a little Gainsborough horse), and Mr. Twynam, of Quoblie, swam the river Itchen and the canal near Twyford, both getting safely across and having the hounds to themselves for some time. After Mr. Craven gave up, Sir John Halket came on the scene, and for a season or two, with Jack Bradley, and afterwards Mr. Dyson (who was so well known in connexion with Mr. Anderson, and afterwards had the Isle of Wight hounds), to carry the horn, had a succession of wonderful runs. Next we find Mr. Scotland, of Bishop's Sutton, in conjunction with his son-in-law, the late Mr. Yates, father of Mr. Arthur Yates, famous as a successful rider and trainer of steeplechasers, had some deer, and turned out before his harriers, keeping the game alive with a great deal of enthusiasm and success, and clearly demonstrating how suited the country was to that style of sport, although, had it not been so, Mr. Scotland was such a thorough sportsman that he would have been sure to make it a success. He was altogether a most extraordinary man, a light weight and fine rider, and he broke a young thoroughbred after he was considerably over eighty years of age. He would also, at the same time of his life, think nothing of walking the seven or eight miles to Chilland and back for a chat with his friend Mr. Nevill, for they were both staghunters at the same period ; but there was nothing like rivalry or opposition between them. Mr. Yates, although a heavier weight than his father-in-law, was equally keen, and by his genial, hearty manner did much to render the pack popular, while we need not say that, from his earliest years, Mr. Arthur Yates was well to the front ; and when a few more summers were over his head, and he came out on his horse Playman, by Flatcatcher, who was his first steeplechaser, and ran well for the Liverpool in Huntsman's year, there was no catching him. Bristles, by Vidette out of Pigskin, was another that carried him well to hounds, besides winning any amount of steeplechases, and we often think of a tremendous great stake and bound, with a water-carrier behind, that he jumped as a two-year-old in the Bishop Sutton meadows.

As the chase of the deer declined at Bishop's Sutton it increased at Chilland, and Mr. Nevill, who had been gradually building up a pack of the beautiful black St. Hubert hounds,

may be said to have caught the staghunting mantle of Mr. Scotland, as the Messrs. Yates, father and son, dropped it. The black St. Huberts, like the old staghounds, are worthy of more than a mere passing notice, as they had been kept by the rangers and keepers of the New Forest from time immemorial for retrieving wounded deer in the Forest. A keeper told us that his family had been on their walk (the Beauleigh one) for more than three hundred years, and they had handed the breed down from father to son for that time. One had been known to drive a slightly wounded buck from one end of the Forest to the other, and, bringing him back, set him up to bay so that he was shot, and this single-handed and alone when the Forest held many thousands of deer. From a couple procured from Primmer, on the Boldrewood Walk, Mr. Nevill bred his pack, and with them showed such sport as was never excelled before or since. Mr. Nevill soon got up a strong pack of the black St. Huberts, and took them into the New Forest to join the bloodhounds collected by Captains William and Powell to hunt the red deer, between the time the Royal Buckhounds ceased to go into the Forest and the slaughter of the deer, under the fresh arrangements as regards the management of the Forest, where they showed some very good sport, which we were lucky enough to witness. However, it is with the carted deer that Mr. Nevill made his name in the annals of sport, and some very good ones he had; some of the best were kindly sent him by the Duke of Beaufort from his herd at Badminton. Strange to say, Mr. Nevill got some deer so tame that they would follow him home after hunting, an instance or two of which I will quote from a letter written by him to his friend 'Æsop,' and published by him in his *Sporting Reminiscences of Hampshire*:—

'I now relate to you several chases of the stag Monarch. I turned him out in the year 1855 close to Worthy Kennels, and he gave a nice gallop. When the chase was over he followed me home, being on horseback, which he frequently did. Another time he gave me an excellent run from Winchester racecourse. He ran from there to Wonston, over the open to Hill Farm, to Norwood, through Littleton, and was taken at Winchester in a pond. As soon as I rode up I called him, and he instantly left the water with a bound and went home close to my stirrup, which astonished my sporting friends. The hind Princess also many times did the same thing. She was left (in 1856) in the meadows with a cow, when she thought proper to roam away, and was absent for six months, and then I heard of her in Burntwood. I immediately let out two couple and a half of my staghounds, and, with my



"Stag Hunting in Herts"

father, my huntsman, and a whip, after drawing for some time, roused her; she gave us first a ring round the wood, then broke away for Shrowner, from there to the Grange Park and Candover, through Wield and College Wood, Chawton Park, and Newton Common, and she was then a quarter of an hour before the small pack. She was seen by a man to go into Inny Down when it was quite dusk; my hounds and horses were quite tired, so I whipped off and left her for another day. The distance was supposed to be thirty miles by the way she ran. Three weeks after I heard of her from that noted sportsman, Mr. E. Knight, of Chawton, and, taking the same number of hounds, I found her in Bushy Lees, and ran her at a racing pace for one hour. . . . The deer was running amongst some cows, and the huntsman hallooed to a man to open the yard gate. . . . I instantly got off my horse and went into the yard; the moment I called to her she instantly came to me, and, although she had been in a wild state for six months, she followed me into a pen, and would have followed me home had I not thought it too far.'

For many years Mr. Nevill showed marvellous runs round Winchester, and his annual meet at the barracks there was quite a *fête* day in the town. Long after he could not mount a horse he hunted in his gig, and always contrived to be up at the finish, be the run what it may, as he made very light of an ordinary down fence on wheels, to the no small dismay at times of the man who drove with him. The most curious thing was that, although he hunted hare with the same hounds, they were perfectly steady when on deer, and would run through a hundred hares and never notice them. But we must leave Mr. Nevill, although there are anecdotes extant concerning him sufficient to fill a whole number of *Fores*, and come to more recent times.

Space now compels us to pass on to Mr. Joseph Anderson, the great Piccadilly hunter dealer, and rival of the Elmores when they were sweeping the steeplechase board with Lottery, Gaylad, and The British Yeoman, he holding his own gallantly with Cigar, Rochelle, and other cross-country cracks. When he retired from active business, Mr. Anderson (who is popularly supposed to have sat for 'The Gentleman in Black's' portrait of 'John Thoroughpin') bought Mr. Etwall's place at Longstock, where Andover, Anton, Antonio, and a lot of other good horses were bred, and settled down there as a country gentleman, a part he carried out far better than many men retired from business that we could name. He had a pack of harriers with which he hunted deer, and showed some capital sport during the few years he kept the place; was, of course, well

mounted, as price was no object with him, and a grey horse that he rode at this time looked worth a king's ransom. He had a wonderfully smart lad as whip, who used to open the Hampshire people's eyes for some time by his performances on a little chestnut mare when any obstacles worth jumping came in the way. Captain Anderson, his son, used to be capitally mounted also; and when Mr. Anderson met at Danebury to give the Duke of Beaufort a sight of his pack it was altogether a gala day. Mr. Bidgood, from Wallop House, on Thistle Whipper (a son of Mr. Etwall's horse of that name), and well known between the flags, on Merryman, not to mention Rattlesnake or Firefly, was always well to the fore with these hounds; as was Mr. Dyson (on his thoroughbred bay stallion), who lived in Longstock village. Amongst others who took and kept a good place were Allen, Ringer (on a weight-carrying chestnut by a blood horse out of a Suffolk Punch), Fitt, French, Russell, Alfred Day (the well-known jockey), &c. &c. After Mr. Anderson, Mr. Craven, of Wyke, had a pack for a short time, and we believe did well with them; but, as we never saw them, cannot say much about their performances.

We must now come nearer to the present time, and tell of what we saw at Danebury in the spring of 1892, for Tom Cannon, the celebrated jockey, has set the ball rolling as regards stag-hounds in Hants once more. When they then met at Danebury we had the luck to be with them, and how many recollections of old familiar days of sport crowded on us as we made our way across Houghton Down and by the back of the stand to the tryst. It was here that Nat Langham took his breathers best pace three or four days a week from Stockbridge to Danebury, when training to fight his last battle with Caunt, and so won the hearts of every one by his civil and quiet demeanour that half the country side wore his colours. Over Houghton Down many a right good greyhound has been tried for Amesbury in the days of the Etwalls, Ralph and William. In Sadlier's plantation a merry little mill took place after one Stockbridge meeting, while the police regaled themselves with the fleshpots which some right good lads had provided for them in one of the tents, sipping deeply of beer and Lethe while it went on. A glance to the right reminds of Sydmonton in his two-year-old day making his way to Hurstbourne Park instead of the post after having deposited Wells on his back in front of the stand, and we seem to see Nat Flatman's blank face as he returned to scale growling

out, 'Done again by a head!' when Alfred Day had outridden him in two consecutive matches on the New Mile after such an exhibition of horsemanship on both sides as is seldom seen. Even that fades before the remembrance of a match from the 'Stand In' between Isaac Day, of North Leech, and Captain Little. The races were over, and all were starting for Danebury, when some one proposed the match, Isaac Day riding a beautiful fourteen-hand cob, looking as old-fashioned as could be, one fit to carry Bishop Wilberforce in the Row, the pair reminding one of a substantial squire setting off to inspect his shorthorns and prize pigs, for Mr. Day was a welter, and had a stout oak staff that looked like doing yeoman's service whenever the gout came; Captain Little (dressed as he had been riding through the day, save his overcoat) being mounted on All Serene, a fourteen-three nag that had won steeplechases in Ireland, and was given to John Day by Lord Howth. We have read of 'Hellfire Dick' (Goodison) getting the Rocket gelding on his legs in old Q.'s quarter-mile matches, we have seen 'Speedy Paine' slip his field on old Cranberry in sprint races, but Isaac Day and his pony beat all hollow. Almost ere the starter said 'Go!' he was at the judge's box, beating the Captain handsomely, in spite of his resolute finish, amidst roars of laughter, which were doubled, when, pulling up almost as quickly as he started, he said, laughing, 'I had better go back and weigh in or I shall be disqualified.' Just a passing thought reverts to the reverend divine who secreted himself in the judge's box that he might see the result of an important trial, and we are at Danebury. A hearty welcome and a capital lunch are good things, but we warrant many a one stayed his knife and fork to look up and wonder who Grandfather Day may be, as he is represented on his rough cob, or to recognise 'Young John,' as the late Mrs. Cannon's father was termed in Deighton's inimitable thumbnail sketch. Then we saw 'Honest John' on Crucifix, Alfred Day on Andover, and Wells on Hermit, the heroes of 1854; The Hero, best of stayers, who never walked sound in his life; and some of us, for old acquaintance sake, glanced at the picture of Danebury from Charteris Hill, as it was before Cannon's alterations. When it was in progress Leonard Day, John's second son, mounted his pony and rode into the paddock, telling the artist to be sure and 'put him in the picture,' when, within a few minutes, he was kicked off, and had the event duly recorded

on canvas. But we turned out to hunt rather than eat luncheons and admire pictures, so that the living scene outside has more charms for us, as we find Tom Cannon, Jun., with the horn at his saddle, on Betelgeux, who has turned out such a good sprinter since, with 'Morny' ready to turn them to him on Alfred, his sister on London, and the Master, of course, well mounted, and a cheery good field to keep them in countenance, a useful pack to hunt—not so level perhaps as they have since become, but to get that is a matter of time. Young Tom makes a wonderfully patient, quiet huntsman. 'Morny' is as quick as thought as a whip, so that, with good deer and hounds, all is bound to go well. We only wish space permitted us to record some of their runs, but even the patience of an editor has its limits, and we can only wish the Master of Danebury health to enjoy the sport he provides for others during forthcoming seasons.

GIVING THE TIP.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE BADSWORTH.

By 'BRAMPTON BULL HEAD.'



ES, *I know* he's a weed, but his figure was low,
 He's a rum 'un to look at, a beggar to go;
 So between us we manage the matter to square,
 And as often as not we contrive to be 'there.'
 'Dicky Chivers, I'll go the extent of a hat,
 And a couple of ponies I'll give you to that,
 Though I'm poor, that as soon as the icicles yield
 To Apollo, I'll pound every man in the field
 The first day we've a run, but you'll bear it in mind
 That *your* share of that day to the meet in confined.
 I'm in earnest, Dick Chivers, although you may laugh,
 We've had (Paddy and I) our full share of your chaff.'
 Now the owner of 'Paddy,' young Charley McBride,
 Was a farmer who lived on the Fitzwilliam side
 Of the 'Badsworth,' half Tyke and half Irish, his breed
 Was all right, though in funds he'd run sadly to seed.
 He was one of a set in the Badsworth who knew
 How to raise 'the convenient' by sale of a screw.
 'Oh!' cries Chivers, 'your ponies I'm ready to take,
 And, moreover, I'm free these conditions to make,

The hunt servants, the ladies, and Anthony Mann
 Shall be barred, and the rest you may beat if you can.'
 'Done, and thanks,' said McBride, 'for I'm free to confess
 I'd lost sight of old Mann and that raking "express."'

* * * * *

Sunday week brought the thaw, there were lashings of rain;
 Monday, files of bright scarlet in Eddethorpe lane.
 Willie Poles came from Wentworth, the Stamborough crew,
 And staunch Guy, who for Barnsley boys makes the best brew;
 But they all seemed afraid of the 'bone in the ground'—
 'Twas in vain that you looked for a mount that was sound.
 There was one lanky stranger, in Yankeeeland born,
 Who looked more 'in the know' about 'futures' for corn
 Than such things as 'View holloa!' 'Hold hard!' 'Gone away,'
 And he came too with Tommy from Brampton that day.
 They'd a fox close by Darfield—the gorse I forget,
 But *mirabile dictu*, the 'screw selling' set
 From the start seemed determined the Yankee to sight,
 Though he quickly veered off to a lane on the right,
 And went pounding along quite three points from the line,
 Seeming bent to 'plain sailing' his work to confine;
 Now in front, now in rear, popping into the lane,
 Popping over the fences, the fields to regain,
 But still close to the stranger, he'd chances to view
 All the paces and points of each boiling-house screw;
 Meanwhile hounds streaming eastward had run him to sight
 As the chimneys of Elsecar rose on the right.
 Where were Charley and Paddy? Well placed in the run,
 While the 'boys' with the Yankee were having their fun.
 But that rattling 'View holloa!' was rather too much
 For those boys, so at last they came on with a rush,
 To make up for lost time, swearing Yankee might go
 To a place whose location is somewhere below;
 But repentance comes late, though like demons they ride,
 They're the hares and the tortoise is Charley McBride!

* * * * *

The next Wednesday's fixture was Barnsley! that day
 'Tis the custom such bets as friend Dicky's to pay
 At the King's Head, the house where the chops they provide.
 There was soon a *rencontre* 'twixt Dick and McBride.
 'Who's your hatter?' cries Charley. 'Oh, hang it, I'll pay!'
 But it's all through that Yankee, he led them astray.
 What the deuce they could see in his great lanthorn jaw,
 Or his riding—his seat was the worst I e'er saw.
 To draw fellows like Poles from the line I can't think.'
 'Well, I'll tell you,' said Charley; 'I gave them the wink

Just a week since to-day, and then told every one
As a secret—the Yankee with ease might be done,
 For he'd come to buy hunters, and knew just the same
 About whether a hunter were spavined or lame,
 Or had broken his wind, had a crick in his back.
 He could simply distinguish the white from the black !'

'BUYING THE PARSON'S HUNTER.'

By 'CLERICUS.'

IT does not take a very clever man to buy a good hunter at one of the modern auction sales, or for the matter of that at Tattersall's on a Monday, but to pick up one at a fair is very different. That is to say, a really *good* hunter, for any fool could buy a bad one, and as a rule every fool does. Possibly the designation 'good hunter' may want a deal of defining. You may have a horse up to your weight, and a rare jumper, but his style of going may be unpleasant and not infrequently the temper of the beast may not suit the temperament of the rider. Of course every sporting butcher likes a horse that is for ever pulling hard and twisting its head about ; it is his idea of blood and stylishness, and gives every man in the field the notion (he thinks) that he rides no horses but 'them as is 'igh lived and mettlesome.' With weak biceps, nerves like fiddlestrings on the snap, and fingers as tender as the skin of a ripe tomato, I cared not for such. My ideal horse at the time (I was fresh off a sick bed, if such an expression can really be allowable, for I was as stale as the average railway bar sandwich), was one which required some jogging to make him move at all, and would only jump when I asked him, yet was able to keep to the front in a good thing across country as well as do a little bit of occasional hacking. In truth, a horse not to be picked up every day, or indeed in every fair. Yet I was not despairing, and with a full belief in my own judgment, my knowledge of horseflesh and of human nature, I set out for the annual fair at Hardcastle one nice evening in October, a warm comforter round my neck, an Ulster coat down to my heels, and my cheque book in my pocket, also, I may add, another book, *Every man his own Vet*, or something of that sort, in which I had been studying the places from the illustrations, where

I might look out for splints, spavins, or curbs. It was no doubt a very useful work if one had been able to commit all its hints and instructions to memory in an afternoon, but as this would have required a lifetime I might as well have left it at home. Possibly, if a man is a good judge of human nature, and knows nothing of horses at all, he will come better out of the deal than the man who thinks he knows a horse better than any one living. This latter type of customer is one that I believe the horse-dealers are universally fond of, they can always do business with him, and, indeed, they say 'it is a treat to do so,' and no doubt it is.

It was close upon eleven o'clock in the forenoon when I arrived at the market green at Hardcastle, where the fair was being held, and I found business proceeding in the usual noisy way. Stout men were cracking whips and rattling hats behind raw-looking horses which were ridden up and down by nagsmen with jackets off, their tight trousers trying to follow the example of the sleeves, which were rolled up to the elbows. Nervous young colts screwed their mouths in the air as with the tongue roughly drawn out, city buyers examined their teeth to check the reports as to age, and every now and then some poor unfortunate would let out a rough grunt or roar as if afraid of the ash-plant which was threatened to be brought across its ribs, and so proclaimed to the intending customer that it was 'touched in its wind,' though of course the seller could swear it was only 'the harmless remains of a recent severe cold.' Business was brisk in van horses, dray horses, and ponies for costers' purposes, but there were few really good hunters, so far as I could observe. One or two brougham horses, in a rough condition, were secured for West End London yards, from out of which, no doubt, after being driven on the Embankment by skilled hands for a few weeks they would find places in the stalls of some wealthy nobleman, as they possessed all the material for converting showy animals out of. After looking over several lots or 'strings,' I was about to take my departure, when a stout dealer to whom I had been conversing, not more prepossessing in appearance than others engaged in the trade, having only one eye and a half, and not one trace of honesty in either, said,—

'You want a nice, quiet, useful hunter, don't you? up to your weight, mild tempered, and can go in a dog-cart?'

'You have almost pictured the very horse,' I said.

'Ah, then, I can suit you to a "T." Our parson, who is down at the "Market Inn," he's dining at the "ordinary" just

now, was telling me that he wouldn't mind letting me have his horse at a price—mind, I say at a price, for he's a good one—as he wants something a bit slower. Being a parson, you see, the Bishop don't like it.' There was a wink after this with the whole eye, and a wriggle of the whip intended to be explanatory.

'Bill,' he said, 'go down to the Reverend Mister Duemall, you'll find him at the "Market Inn" and tell him a gentlemen wishes to see him.' 'And now,' he says, again turning to me, 'if I succeed in making a sale, I'm to have a couple of sovereigns, just for spoiling my own business. For I could make a bit out of parson's horse at any time now that the hunting season is on.'

'You shall have your two sovereigns, I promise you, if I take the horse, but I suppose I shall have to take a run into the country to look at him.'

'Well, it's lucky that parson has ridden him over this very morning himself, and the horse is having his oats in the old "Market Inn" stables. And there now, I've told you. I must have two sovereigns for the deal if it comes off. Most men would claim five, maybe ten, but I likes a customer that there may be business in again, though I can't just suit him at the time.'

So saying he flourished his long whip twice round my legs in a dreamy manner as if I was something that required to have a little life put into me for sale purposes, and then walked off smartly in the direction of some farmers who were busily engaged in passing their hands over the rough hairy legs of an old cart mare. I was waiting for the result and the tying up of the tail—the tied-up tail being the sign of a sold horse in the trade—when a very meek-faced looking gentleman, in white neckcloth, short black hat, and covert coat over a long canonical smock, made his appearance accompanied by the lad Bill. There could be little doubt about it, this was the parson, and a nice, amiable, middle-aged looking gentleman he was. The dealer left his customers for a moment and introduced me, after, I thought, saying a word in his ear. Had the parson been a confederate, I should have felt not a little suspicious, but knowing that horse-dealers will do things in their own sly way, I imagined that the man with the whip was only making an apology for bringing a gentleman away from his dinner. If any suspicion had been allowed to rise in my mind it would very soon have been driven out by the knowing attitude assumed by the former, the wink with the whole eye, and the holding up behind the



The Market Green

parson's shoulder of the two fingers of the right hand, and which signal said plainly, 'mind my two sovereigns.'

With a face as meaningless as that of the Sphinx, the parson bowed. 'High Church, I'm certain,' I said to myself as I bowed in return, for there was really something about his face which raised that impression.

'You wished, I believe, to buy my favourite old hunter Friday, I learn?'

'Oh, no! I merely have been told that you did not mind parting with your horse, which I am told is a good one.'

'Ahem! the horse is a good one, too good a horse for one of my profession, but as to parting with him, that is a matter I can scarcely think about, the dear, good old horse and I have had so many pleasant days together, we have.'

'Well, sir, I am told it is only a matter of price, and I do not mind giving you the worth of your animal if he is up to my requirements.'

'Well,' he said, 'here he is, and you can see for yourself.'

Looking round I saw the dealer's lad Bill astride of a great big ramping chestnut horse, fiddle-headed, flat-sided, and ragged in the hip. Not altogether a handsome horse, but still a look of work and general usefulness about him.

'Woa, woa, Friday, old man,' said the parson, going up and patting him on the nose. 'Good old horse. There's not many in their coats of scarlet that can show the way to the old man in black when he has got you under him.'

'And what is it that really makes you think of letting him go, apart from the matter of price, my friend. Is he quite sound?'

'Sound as a bell, sir. No, sir, it is to avoid temptation, sir, to avoid temptation. You see it would ill become me to be always leading the field. Some people sacrifice their lives to lead the chase, I would have to sacrifice my living. The Bishop, sir! the Bishop, you understand, is not a hunting man.'

Having had the horse trotted and walked up and down a bit I mounted him myself, and found him exceedingly pleasant to ride. Getting off, I examined him all over and found his legs, as I thought, pretty sound, though there was just a suspicion of spavin inside the near hock. The dealer, always ready to assist, pronounced it nothing at all, and the parson assured me, and who could doubt a parson's word, even in buying a horse, it was but the result of a bruise sustained in the hunting field.

The lad then galloped him up and down in order that I might see that his wind was right, and I must say it did not seem to be altogether satisfactory; but *no*, the meek-looking gentleman assured me that 'there was never a sounder horse so far as wind was concerned.'

'Wind, sir, you see,' said he, 'is a very queer kind of case, if you will knock it out of a horse just at the very beginning of a run you cannot expect it to have any to carry you to the end. Indeed, I may be allowed to tell you a little story to illustrate this. Some years ago I had a celebrated London musician down with me from a Saturday to Monday, and he agreed to officiate at the organ on Sunday. The ordinary organist used few, if any, of the stops, but my friend soon knocked them open with feet and hands at a great rate. All at once the wind ran out, and no sound was heard but a sort of rough wheeze, just like when the old horse pulled up there. He shouted out to the bellows blower why he didn't go on blowing? "Go on blowing indeed," said the old man, "not if I know it. I've played Jackson's *Te Deum* for the last ten years on this organ, and I know as well as any man how many ups and downs of my handle it takes to raise wind for it." That's just it, then. I tell you, my friend, you shouldn't take out more stops of your old hunter at starting than what'll carry you the time, no matter how cleverly you may wish to perform.'

'Well, then, the price,' I asked, laughingly, well pleased with the story, though I did not believe in the point of it.

'A hundred guineas, and not a penny less, he's only six off, and coming to his best, and there is not a better horse or a quieter in the Vale!'

After the usual higgling, I gave him a cheque for £90, slipped into the hand of the dealer the promised two sovereigns, and gave the lad who was to deliver him at my address half-a-crown. We exchanged cards, and as I placed his into my case, I read the address—

*Rev. Joseph Duemall,
The Parsonage,
Stockington.*

The horse was delivered all right, and on the opening day, which very nearly proved my closing day, I rode him with the Black Horse. A bigger blackguard had never saddle across his back, and had it not been for the fact that he was broken-winded, he would have killed half the pack, and me into the bargain.

'Would you mind never bringing out that horse again?' said the huntsman at the close of the day; 'he has always been a nuisance when out with us.'

'Always?' I asked, 'do you really know him then?'

'Know him! I should think everybody does but yourself. Where did you get hold of him, sir?'

'At Hardcastle Fair. I bought him direct from the parson who hunted him.'

'Parson who hunted him, did you?' and he turned round to his whip and said, 'Right you was, Bill, the gentleman is one of Gospel Joe's Congregation (then turning to me), you should look after your money, sir, though I'm afraid it's no use, and if you don't want to be laughed out of the county you hold your tongue about it.'

'Then, may I ask, was he not a parson?'

'Well, I believe he was originally entered for the Church, but he broke down in his preparation. Fallen saints make best devils they say, and parsons as break down make rare good horse copers, as you have found out. If he wasn't too old and tough to tear the teeth out of my hounds, I'd give you a sovereign for him for boiling, otherwise he's not worth a penny. Good day, sir, don't buy horses from parsons.' And I never have since.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



R. A. C. HAVELL is again to the front with his ever-welcome delineations of sport, and this time they take the form of four racing incidents, as artistically and pleasantly treated as anything that has yet proceeded from his pencil. The first plate of this consecutive set of coloured prints represents *A False Start*, and shows horses in the various and more or less constrained positions of being pulled up. Plate 2, *They're Off*, depicts a field of nine horses, some well to the fore, others commencing to tail. In *Coming into the Straight* they are seen rounding a bend, and at present it is 'anybody's race,' but in this series the fourth plate results in *A Close Finish*. The thoroughbred character of the horses is very notable, and the size 14 inches by 11 will enable them to be placed even in the smallest sporting sanctum. Messrs. Fores, Piccadilly, are the publishers.

The 'ups and downs' of sport, with the like alternations of love-making, are well set forth in Mr. H. Cumberland Bentley's latest literary effort, entitled '*A Dream's Fulfilment*' (Remington & Co.). Hunting, shooting, and steeplechasing adventures, besides others, are treated in a bright and breezy way, and with the unfailing charm which accompanies the relation of sport by a sportsman.

Reminiscences of a Red Coat, by H., is an anecdotal description of events and incidents occurring to a soldier in England, Ireland, Africa, Egypt, and other parts of the globe, and will doubtless have the effect the author desires for it, namely, 'that it may help to pass an idle hour away.' Harrison & Sons, Pall Mall, are the publishers.

'The cry is, still they come!' Another magazine for town and country readers called *The Country House* (Thomas Brown, 30 Fleet Street) made its first appearance last October, and looks as though it meant to stay. Foremost amongst its contributors is Sir J. B. Lawes, Bt., who discourses learnedly on the subject of 'Making a Pasture'; S. Baring-Gould; the Right Hon. Walter Long, M.P.; the Earl of Winchelsea, and John Strange Winter, are also some of the contributors, and needless to say their papers are full of interest. Besides sundry sporting notes, sportsmen will find a paper written and illustrated by our old contributor Finch Mason. The other illustrations are good.

In soliciting the patronage of horse-owners, the patentees of the *Mohawk Bits* claim for their invention the merits of effectiveness conjoined with the utmost amount of humanity of which the instrument is capable. High-class testimonials fortified by the testimony of the Royal Humane Society would appear to substantiate their claim. It may be inspected at 12 Brompton Road, S.W.

Each succeeding year brings with it improvements in the form and fittings of the fashionable 'iron horse'; but it would seem that the 'pony' of the wheel-world—the popular 'Bantam' Bicycle (Crypto Works, Ltd.), has attained well-nigh perfection in the direction of safety conjoined with simplicity, and lightness with strength—*desiderata* which should recommend themselves to aspiring cyclists of both sexes.



1

Racing. ❖

BY

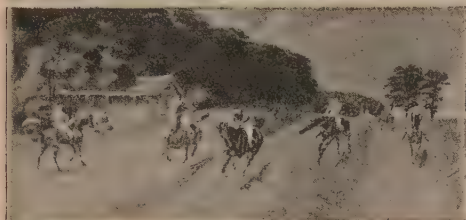
J. BEER.

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2



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4

Plate 1.—EPSOM.

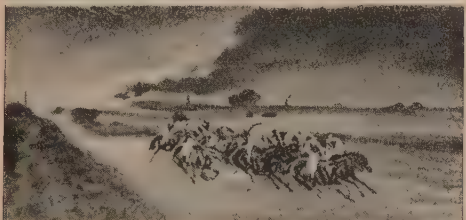
THE PADDOCK.

Plate 2.—SANDOWN.

THE PRELIMINARY CANTER.

Plate 3.—DONCASTER.

AT THE POST.



5

Plate 4.—ASCOT.

THE START.

Plate 5.—NEWMARKET.

THE RACE.



6

Plate 6.—GOODWOOD.

THE FINISH.





Hunting.

BY
F. C. BOULT,

A. C. HAVELL,

AND

B. J. NIGHTINGALE.

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PLATE 1.—

The First Day
of the Season.

PLATE 2.—

“Half-a-minute!
and then Tally-ho!”

PLATE 3.—

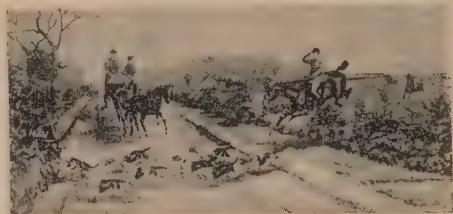
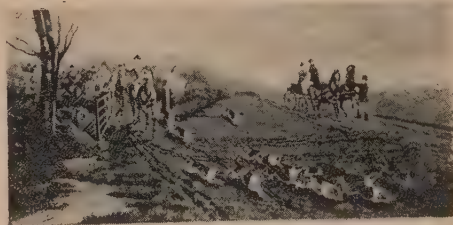
“Hold hard, Gentlemen!”

PLATE 4 —

A Breast-high Scent.

5 PLATE 5.—

The End of
a long Run.





A Foxhunter's Dream.

A Racing Nightmare.

By A. C. HAVELL.

Price £2. 2s. each plate.

Size 24 × 18½ inches.

HAND-COLOURS.



Trying the New Team,

Refusing Water,

BY

BY

A. C. HAVELL.

WILFRID THOMAS.

Price 15s. each plate.

Size 20 × 15 inches.

HAND-COLOURS.



Plate 1.—A VIEW HALLOO.



Plate 2.—A CHECK.



Plate 3.—A HOLLOA FORWARD.



Plate 4.—KILLED IN THE OPEN.

✧ HUNTING. ✧

By W. H. HOPKINS.

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Run to Earth,

Companion to Gone Away,
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Price £1. 1s.

Size 24 x 14 inches.



PLATE 1.—EPSOM.
Inspecting the Competitors.



PLATE 2.—KEMPTON.
The Parade.



PLATE 3.—SANDOWN.
Preparing to Start.



PLATE 4.—NEWMARKET.
Waiting for the Verdict.

RACING. By A. C. HAVELL.

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HAND-COLOURLED.

Price £4. 4s. the Set of Four, or £1. 1s. each.



PLATE 1.—WARWICK.
At the Bend.



PLATE 2.—SANDOWN.
The First Time Round.



PLATE 3.—MANCHESTER.
A Refusal.



PLATE 4.—LIVERPOOL.
The Water Jump.

STEEPLECHASING. By A. C. HAVELL.

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Price £4. 4s. the Set of Four, or £1. 1s. each.



Plate 1.—DRAWN BLANK.

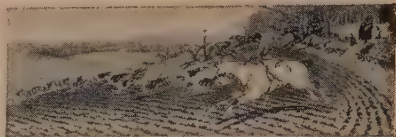


Plate 2.—BREAKING COVER.



Plate 3.—MAKING A CAST.



Plate 4.—NEARLY WHO-HOOP!

✧ THE NOBLE SPORT, ✧

By A. C. HAVELL

Price, £4. 4s. the Set of Four, or £1. 1s. each.

Size, 30 × 10½ inches, HAND-COLOURLED.



"There's many a spill
'Twixt the Find and the Kill."



"Who-hoop! they have him,
they're round him."

By A. C. HAVELL.

Price, £1. 1s. each.

Size 26 × 13 inches, HAND-COLOURLED.



SUSPENSE.

By F. C. BOULT.

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A FLYING VISIT.

By E. CALDWELL.

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PLATE 1.—THE PRELIMINARY.

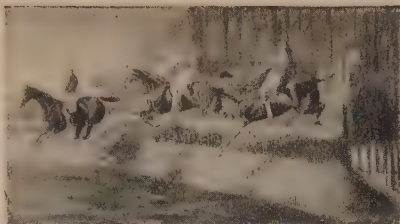


PLATE 2.—THE FIRST FENCE.



PLATE 3.—THE WATER JUMP.



PLATE 4.—THE LAST HURDLE.

STEEPLECHASING.

— By J. BEER. —

Price £4. 4s. the Set of Four, or £1. 1s. each.

Size 23 x 13 inches, HAND-COLOURED.



PLATE 1. BRINGING UP A SKIRTER.



PLATE 2.—AN AWKWARD CUSTOMER.

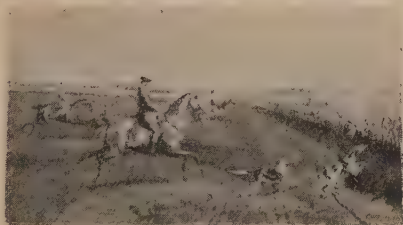


PLATE 3.—A BURNING SCENT.



PLATE 4.—"BELLOWS TO MEND."

HUNTING.

— By F. CECIL BOULT. —

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Morning,
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Price, 10s. 6d.



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Price, £1. 1s.



Evening,
Companion to Morning,
BY
A. C. HAVELL.
Size 16 x 9 inches.
Price, 10s. 6d.

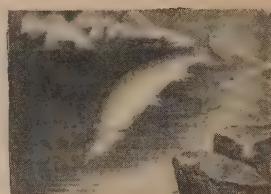
HAND-COLOURS.



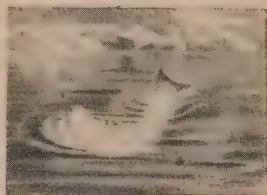
THE RISE.



TOWN.



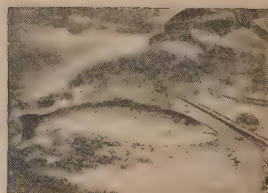
THE LEAP.



THE STRUGGLE.



COUNTRY.



LANDED.

❧ SALMON FISHING ❧

By W. BRACKETT.

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COUNTRY
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ROTTEN ROW. From the Original by John Charlton. Shows us a number of well-mounted ladies and gentlemen looking on at a parade of the Four-in-Hand Club; a well-appointed team of greys passing in the foreground. Size and price the same as above.

THE SPORTING CANTAB. By Cuthbert Bradley. The Central Figure represents a modern University sportsman puffing a cigarette in front of his fireplace. Over the mantelpiece are depicted the insignia of learning and sport; the latter, as may be supposed, predominating; while at his feet are three fox-terriers. Surrounding him are sporting and other incidents connected with his 'Varsity' life. Coloured Print, $17 \times 12\frac{3}{4}$ inches, £1 1s.

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5. DUCK. WELL STALKED.
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'OUT FOR A SCAMPER,' by F. Cecil Boulton, represents

a Pack of Hounds rushing out of the kennel-door, which has just been thrown open by 'The Whip,' who, in Macintosh and with Crop in hand, is about taking them out to Exercise. Coloured Print, 20 by 14 inches. Price 15s.

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to the above), shows a Pack of Hounds in Full Cry, foreshortened and coming towards the spectator; Huntsman and Field bringing up the rear. Coloured Print, 20 by 14 inches. Price 15s.

THE YOUNG MASTER, by A. C. Havell. Presumably

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